Supreme Court affirms ban on jai alai

Story on Page A2

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THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2001 ★ 44 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 193 ₱15

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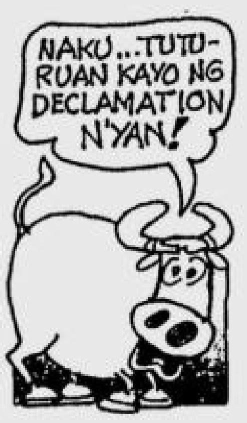
Miriam tutors Loi

By A. Nocum

NEOPHYTE Sen. Luisa "Loi" Estrada has chosen outgoing Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago as her unofficial tutor in a crash course in legislative work, but

MIRIAM/ A13


NAKU...TUTURUAN KAYO NG DECLAMATION N'YAN!

Hospital arrest for now

Court decision based on doctors' latest report on Erap, Jinggoy

By Martin P. Marfil, Cathy C. Yamsuan and Agnes E. Donato

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada and his son Jinggoy yesterday won a small victory in the Sandiganbayan: The court allowed them to remain detained at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center "until further orders."

The anti-graft court issued the terse resolution as the Ombudsman "vigorously" objected to another Sandiganbayan order granting the younger Estrada a five-day furlough "to clear his desk" as outgoing mayor of San Juan.

Interviewed at the Senate, Senator-elect and former first lady Loi Estrada continued to bat for house arrest for her husband and son, although she said she was pleased about the order for hospital confinement.

"He still prefers house arrest so that he will be at home. I don't know whether they'll allow it, but he's really pressing for house arrest," she said.

For his part, Jinggoy said he was "very happy that the Sandiganbayan granted our petition to put me and my father under hospital arrest."

The court made the order more than a week after resolving that the Estradas should be transferred to a police camp in Laguna.

The Sandiganbayan's third division said that its decision was based on the latest medical bulletin issued by Veterans (VMMC) doctors, dated June 16 but filed only on June 19.

The doctors said that although Estrada was now deemed "physically fit to travel," it would be best to keep him at the hospital, a few minutes' drive from the Sandiganbayan.

They said the hospital complex "may provide a physical and psychological environment conducive to the enhancement of his clinical improvement."

HOSPITAL/ A14

FAST CRAFT of the Special Action Forces knifes into the calm of the Basilan waters on their regular patrols to block the Abu Sayyaf from using the shoreline as an escape route. DENNIS SABANGAN

Ma, daughter freed before start of peace talks

PAGADIAN CITY—A mother and her daughter were released by their kidnappers yesterday morning, hours before peace talks between the government and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front were to start in Tripoli, Libya.

Lawyer Maridol Liong, 33, and her 5-year-old daughter Alexa—who were taken by gunmen on March 29 in Dipolog City—were freed in an undisclosed place in Tungawan, Zamboanga Sibugay.

The military earlier said the kidnappers were members of a supposed MILF "special operation group" led by a certain Abdusallam Akiddin alias Commander Kiddie. But the MILF denied this.

Ustadz Shariff Julabbi, MILF spokesperson in Western Mindanao, said Liong's husband James paid a "board and lodging fee" to the kidnappers.

Julabbi said he helped bring about the Liongs' release after Undersecretary Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant for regional concerns in Southern Mindanao, asked him in April to do so.

The government and the MILF were then engaged in preliminary talks.

"I sent my men to the field to locate the victims," Julabbi said over radio station dzMM in Manila.

Julabbi refused to say how much was paid. Reuters quoted him as saying that the kidnappers had earlier demanded ransom of P50 million.

In Tripoli, Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona told the news agency Jana that he was happy to be there, and praised the efforts of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi to "bring about peace in the Philippines."

Seif al-Islam, Gadhafi's son and the president of the Gadhafi Charity Foundation, will preside over the talks, which Malaysian and Indonesian representatives, including Indonesian Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab, are attending. Among the issues to be put forward in the first round of talks is an MILF demand for the Philippine government to recognize more than 40 rebel-controlled areas, where there will

MA/ A13

'I'm not a courier or negotiator'

By Juliet L. Javellana and Carlito Pablo

HIS NAME had surfaced several times in news reports as the courier of the ransom money paid to the Abu Sayyaf by relatives of the freed Dos Palmas hostages.

"My only role is that I helped the families air their appeal to Abu Sabaya," radio announcer Stef Saño told the INQUIRER yesterday in a telephone interview.

"Someone gave them my number," Saño said when asked how come the hostages' relatives knew how to get in touch with him.

A radio talent of Radio Mindanao Network (RMN), Saño admitted he was in Zamboanga City "about two weeks ago." But only to help arrange with the RMN Zamboanga station manager Rey Bayoging the airing of an appeal by Patrick Jao, the father of former hostage Kimberly, and Benito Chua, father of Lalaine Chua who's still being held by the Abu Sayyaf.

But then, Jao and Chua aired their separate appeals from Manila by telephone.

Saño, a former associate of Sipadan hostage negotiator Robert Aventajado, also vehemently denied he asked for a "mobilization fund" of P1 million to P10 million from the victims' families for his role as conduit.

"I am not a conduit, I am not a negotiator. I had nothing to do whatsoever with the delivery of the alleged ransom money. (I am not lying) even if you give me a lie-detector test," Saño told the INQUIRER.

I'M NOT/ A14

Ping: I have nothing to do with kidnaps

OPPOSITION senators yesterday slammed the Macapagal administration for blaming the spree of kidnappings on one of them, saying it should instead focus on improving police visibility and intelligence gathering.

"The President is being fed contaminated and rubbish intelligence reports by the military and police," Senator-elect Panfilo Lacson said in an interview with dzRH.

Lacson was reacting to President Macapagal-Arroyo's statement on Tuesday that a series of abductions in Metro Manila appeared to be part of a sinister plot to destabilize her administration.

The President did not name names, but Interior Secretary Jose Lina said the leader of the kidnap group was "definitely a person from the opposition who had links to the previous administration."

Even so, Lacson—the former Philippine National Police chief of ousted President Joseph Estrada—felt alluded to.

Lacson voiced suspicions his longtime enemy, PNP intelligence chief Senior Supt. Reynaldo

PING/ A14

IN COURT for a preliminary hearing of an injunction against the justice department's probe linking him to kidnapping, Senator-elect Panfilo Lacson is lectured by Manila RTC Judge Ramon Makasiar for disturbing proceedings when Lacson was mobbed by his fans. JESS YUSON

Basilan terrain gives troops hard time

By Julie Alipala-Inot
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ISABELA CITY, Basilan—The military is having difficulty engaging the Abu Sayyaf in combat despite the heavy deployment of troops in the province.

Maj. Alberto Gepilano, military and civilian operations officer of the Joint Task Force Comet, made this admission yesterday, saying the members of the bandit group were "masters of the Basilan terrain."

"They are natives of this place, and it works to their advantage. And they have been able to elude our advancing forces," he said.

Gepilano also said the bandits could "easily blend with the populace . . . because they are just like ordinary citizens."

But Agence France Presse quoted a ranking military official as saying that a showdown was ex-

BASILAN/ A14

WHO WILL BE HOUSE SPEAKER? EDWIN BACASMAS

It's a toss-up between Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad, president of the Liberal Party, and Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia, chair of Lakas-NUCD. The question may be settled on Friday. Again, it may not.

DISAPPEARANCES IN 3 DAYS

47 kilos shabu, drug queen missing

By Floreño G. Solmirano
Chief, PDI S. Luzon Bureau
and Dave M. Veridiano

TWO drug-related "disappearances" in a span of just three days.

On Sunday evening, 46.6 kilos of shabu worth P93.2 million went missing from the evidence room of an Occidental Mindoro court.

Then yesterday morning, a suspected drug queen who is in the Narcotics Group's order of battle escaped from her tightly guarded Camp Crame detention cell.

Rosalinda Manansala, 56, a level-one drug pusher, reportedly escaped by sawing off the iron grills of her cell. And then she just walked out of the NarcGroup compound.

Senior Insp. Pucas Paguio, Mamburao police chief, said the shabu cache was being kept in the evidence room of the Regional Trial Court in Mamburao, Occidental Mindoro. He said it was stolen between 11 p.m. and midnight during a power outage.

Paguio said the thieves ransacked the room where the drugs were being kept as evidence against two Taiwanese nationals who were facing charges in connection with a 1998 shabu haul in Lubang Island.

An anti-narcotics agent, who asked not to be identified, said Manansala, alias "Mommy Rose," was in the NarcGroup's order of battle as one of the notorious illegal drug traffickers operating in Central Luzon.

She was arrested last month by members of the NarcGroup-Special Project Office (SPO) while driving on the North Expressway in Bulacan.

She was charged with drug push-

SHABU/ A13

IBASURA NA YAN!

SC affirms jai alai ban

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

THE SUPREME Court yesterday upheld its Nov. 29, 2000 decision shutting down jai alai operations for lack of a franchise which, it said, can only be granted by Congress.

A one-page resolution signed by SC clerk of court Luzviminda Puno said the high court, by a vote of 8-7, junked the motions for reconsideration filed by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Belle Jai Alai Corp. and Filipinas Gaming Entertainment Totalizator Corp., operators of jai alai games.

"For lack of the required number of votes, the said motions for reconsideration are denied," the resolution stated.

In its Nov. 29 decision, the SC noted that when Pagcor entered into a partnership with Belle and Filipinas to operate jai alai in the country, Pagcor issued a franchise for the operations—a detail that three petitioners, Representatives Raoul del Mar, Federico Sandoval II and Juan Miguel Zubiri, found irregular.

The three said only Congress is authorized to issue gaming franchises.

Taking note of their arguments, the SC ruled that Pagcor had no authority to issue the franchise.

The court said Pagcor was only allowed by law to operate casinos and not jai alai, much less off-fronton betting stations.

Sandoval and Zubiri, in separate interviews, said the new decision was issued "with finality," which meant the three operators could no longer stage games where bets are accepted.

"They can continue with the sport, but betting is no longer allowed," Zubiri said.

"The decision also stressed that Pagcor cannot sublease its own franchise to include venues other than the casinos," he added.

Still, Zubiri said, he continues to see off-fronton betting stations operating.

"These are now illegal. Following this ruling which was issued 'with finality,' authorities can now arrest the operators of the betting stations," he said.

Sandoval faulted Pagcor for insisting that its charter allowed it to operate games of chance.

"Under the Revised Penal Code, jai alai is a game of chance considered illegal along with *jueteng*, *masiao* and *sakla*," the solon said.

Pagcor, one of the government's top money spinners, had appealed for a reversal of a November order stopping operation of the game, saying it might lose up to P3.5 billion in projected revenues this year.

At the time, the Supreme Court said the decision on who runs the franchise to operate jai alai should come from Congress.

"We now have a real Congress and it is best to let Congress resolve this issue considering its policy ramifications on public order and morals," the decision said.

Jai alai is a popular game, which originated in Spain's Basque region and resembles handball, but players use a long curved basket tied to the wrist. *With Reuters*

Sec. Montemayor to inaugurate new NDA central office building

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Q. Montemayor will lead tomorrow in the inauguration of the new central office building of the National Dairy Authority (NDA) located within the BAI compound along Visayas Avenue in Diliman, Quezon City.

The occasion will also be graced by Dr. Leticia Ramos-Shahani and Mayor Socorro O. Acosta of Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon. The two former legislators were the principal authors of Republic Act No. 7884, otherwise known as the National Dairy Development Act of 1985, which led to the creation of the NDA, an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture.

Secretary Montemayor was one of the co-authors of RA 7884 when he was peasant sector representative in the House of Representatives.

The DA head will also take the opportunity to discuss vital matters related to dairy development during a Dairy Farmers' Forum to be participated in by members of NDA-assisted dairy cooperatives and media representatives.

Among the items to be taken up is the need to generate extensive support for the White Revolution, a multi-sectoral undertaking led by the NDA and the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) that seeks to ensure adequate milk supply, increase livelihood opportunities and promote better nutrition, particularly among school children and pre-schoolers.

Another item that is expected to be discussed is the need to set up a regular source of funds for the National Milk Feeding Program (NMFP) one NDA's centerpiece programs that is being implemented in cooperation of dairy cooperatives, members of the Congress, local government units and private institutions. The NMFP is aimed at helping raise the nutritional well-being of malnourished school children and pre-schoolers through massive milk feeding, and at the same time, provide a steady market for dairy farmers.

The NDA currently assists over 6,000 farmer-members of 72 primary dairy cooperatives, which are based in 29 provinces. The said cooperatives comprise the Dairy Confederation of the Philippines (DAIRYCON).

In 2000, DAIRYCON members produced a total of 3.2 million liters of fresh milk valued at over P44 million.

ADVT

Now, private schools want to set curricula

By Blanche Rivera

AFTER their much-criticized request to hike tuition and other fees, private schools are now asking to be allowed to draft their own curricula incorporating computer courses among the major subjects.

The Federation of Private School Administrators, which had come under fire for accusing the Department of Education, Culture and Sports of "spoiling" government teachers, is lobbying for a change in the curricula of private schools.

Eleazar Kasilag, Fapsa president, said the private schools have been meeting to discuss making computer subjects a part of their curricula.

Kasilag said computer subjects, which are being touted by the DECS as the ticket to the future, are not being given much weight in grading procedures to make them a major course of study.

Computer subjects are merely incorporated into the Technology and Home Economics subject in the elementary level.

While some private high schools treat computers as a separate subject, they are not included in the final grade average of students.

"We are trying to see what we can do about it," Kasilag told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview, adding they hope to come up with a curriculum that would gain DECS approval.

"The only help the DECS can give us is to allow us to raise our fees and to be flexible in our curriculums," he said.

Education Secretary Raul Roco said the private schools were free to draft their own curricula.

"They have curriculum freedom. Private schools are allowed to plan their curriculums if it would improve the quality of the education they offer," Roco said, at the launching of the health information program of the DECS and the Department of Health.

Roco and public and private schoolteachers' groups had lambasted Fapsa for saying earlier that the benefits being given by Roco to public school teachers would "hasten the death" of the private schools whose teachers are moving to the government schools.

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Seaman extradited for family's murder

By TJ Burgonio

THE FILIPINO seaman suspected of killing his wife and children in Nueva Vizcaya before fleeing to the United States will be returned to Manila today by US immigration authorities.

Cruise ship mechanic Danilo Afalla, of Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, is scheduled to arrive on Philippine Airlines Flight 103 from Los Angeles at around 5 a.m., airport authorities said.

He will be escorted by agents of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the local National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

Upon arrival, the 40-year-old Afalla will be turned over to NBI officials led by Director Reynaldo Wycoco, Deputy Director Fermin Nasol and chief of the Interpol Division Ricardo Diaz.

Shortly after, he will be brought to Bayombong where he will be tried for parricide before the local municipal trial court, an NBI agent said.

Afalla's deportation to Manila was scheduled weeks ago but US and local authorities could not agree on who would escort him home, the agent said.

His deportation came two months after the bodies of his wife Aperacion, 40; daughter Cheenie Claire, 3, and sons Mark Anthony, 11, and Michael Angelo, 5, were discovered in a shallow riverside grave in Bayombong on April 18. Their heads had been bashed in and their hands were tied.

The next day, Afalla fled to the US.

Local police said Afalla might have carried out the killings in a fit of jealousy, after he suspected his wife of having an affair with another man when he was abroad.

A local court judge issued a warrant for his arrest following the filing of parricide charges against him by police.

Afalla was arrested by INS agents near his Miami, Florida, apartment last month.

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Robot to yield soon–Chavit

By Leoncio Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
and Juliet L. Javellana

VIGAN CITY—Barring any hitches, Abu Sayyaf leader Ghalib Andang, alias Kumander Robot, will surrender to authorities "two to three days from now," outgoing Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson said yesterday.

Ten couriers, led by a Muslim academic, involved in the negotiations for Andang's surrender, have been given safe conduct passes "to go back to Kumander Robot," Singson said in a telephone interview.

The couriers, whom Singson declined to identify, were given a satellite phone and would contact him as soon as they reach Andang in Sulu, he said.

Singson, who is brokering the surrender of Andang and 17 of his men from the Sulu faction of the extremist Abu Sayyaf, said he was acting in his private capacity and spending his own money to facilitate the surrender.

Although he has not been sanctioned as an official government negotiator, Singson said he was in constant communication with Malacañang.

He said that as soon as Andang agrees to surrender, he would relay the information to military officials and plans would be mapped out for the surrender.

From Malacañang, Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said some kind of mechanism would be put in place to facilitate Andang's surrender but stressed that the Abu Sayyaf leader would be immediately arrested upon his surrender.

"If ever that occurs, he will be fetched but he will be put immediately under arrest," Tiglao said.

Tiglao clarified the conflicting positions expressed by various high government officials on the issue of a safe conduct pass for Andang.

In her weekly news conference on Tuesday, President Macapagal-Arroyo emphatically said that Andang would not get a safe conduct pass and that Singson was not asking for one anyway.

But Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan was reported to have said after the news conference that the military was going to issue one to Andang so he could leave his hideout and meet Singson.

Tiglao said the Department of National Defense has clarified that a criminal is not entitled to a safe conduct pass.

"Andang was charged with murder and kidnapping two years ago. Definitely, it's hard to give a safe conduct pass to a person who has been charged. It would look like you are saying he is innocent," Tiglao said.

Andang and his group were responsible for the abduction of European and Asian hostages from the Malaysian resort of Sipadan last year.

Enrile files poll protest

By Martin P. Marfil

OUTGOING Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile is crying "foul" and demanding a recount.

Yesterday he filed an electoral protest against Senator-elect Ralph Recto, accusing the People Power Coalition candidate of benefiting from massive fraud in the last elections.

The protest was filed with the Senate Electoral Tribunal.

Aside from a recount, Enrile wants the tribunal to set aside the proclamation of Recto and have himself declared a winner in the last senatorial polls.

In addition, Enrile is asking for P7 million in damages, with P5 million going to himself and P2 million to his lawyers in fees.

Included in the complaint is Sen. Gregorio Honasan, Enrile's protégé, who was named a "necessary protestee."

"He (Honasan) is impleaded as a necessary party because he stands to benefit or he prejudiced by the judgment in this case, and to afford complete relief to the parties (involved)," Enrile said in his affidavit.

In the 11-page protest, Enrile said that in theory, the elections would have been the best opportunity to determine the true will of the people.

"However, the expression of the people's will was despoiled by the intensive and systematic tampering with and/or fraudulent alteration of election documents for the benefit of... (Recto) and to the prejudice of herein protestant," he said.

Enrile alleged that massive fraud was committed in Ilocos Sur, Pangasinan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Batangas, Albay, Camarines Sur, Negros Occidental, Iloilo city and province, Capiz, Cebu city and province, Bohol, Negros Occidental, Southern Leyte, Zamboanga del Norte and Sur, Basilan, Bacolod City, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Sultan Naga Dimaporo town in Lanao del Norte.

Comelec won't bare final tally

THE COMMISSION on Elections yesterday finally canvassed the last of the 102 certificates of canvass for the senatorial tally, but the poll body has not come up with a final count yet pending the resolution of three petitions filed by the Puwersa ng Masa questioning some 150,000 votes for Senator-elect Ralph Recto.

This as two Comelec commissioners yesterday sought the official records of the National Board of Canvassers on the tally for Zamboanga del Norte which, PnM lawyer Rufus Rodriguez said, has been padded with 30,000 votes for Recto which the NBC had earlier ordered deducted.

Recto emerged with 93,928 votes in the certificate of canvass for Lanao del Sur while Sen. Gregorio Honasan only had 64,869. Sen. Loi Ejercito had 44,059 votes.

But Honasan won in four towns in Maguindanao whose COCs came late because special elections were held there. He got 22,204 votes while Recto got only 13,427 votes. Ejercito got 20,488 votes.

The NBC, however, did not come up with the final tally yesterday even after the canvassing of the Lanao del Sur COC because Rodriguez questioned the tally for Recto in the Comelec canvass report on June 4 which became the basis for the proclamation the next day.

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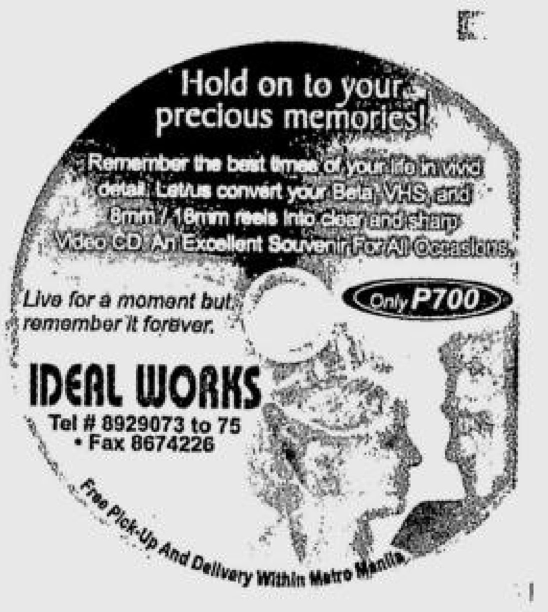

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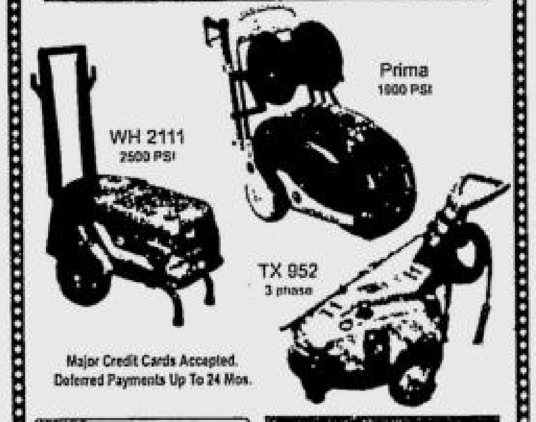

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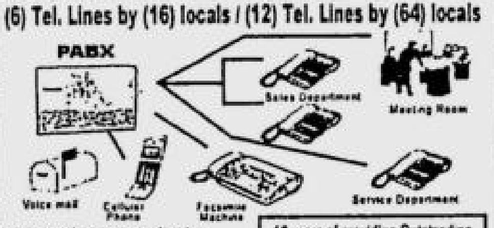

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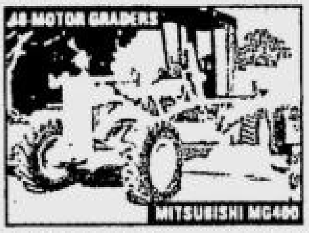

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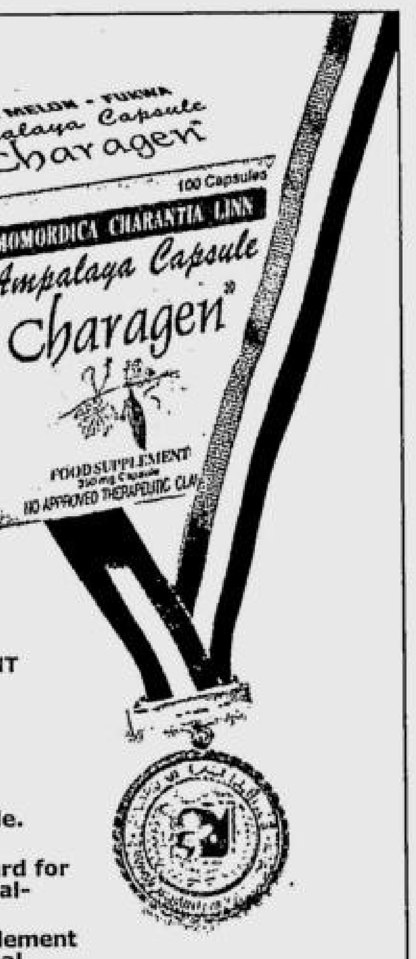

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OPINION

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Intellectual honesty

EDITORIAL

FORMER SENATE President Jovito Salonga's account of the 1971 Plaza Miranda carnage in his memoirs, "A Journey of Struggle and Hope," is a delayed second explosion of a time bomb whose fuse goes bac2k to the first explosion. Coming as it does 30 years after the Plaza Miranda bombing, the memoirs reopen wounds still unhealed by the Plaza Miranda massacre. That tragedy had profound political consequences, including the declaration of martial law in 1972.

The thesis of Salonga's book is not new. He concludes, on the basis of strong evidence, that Jose Ma. Sison, chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and a small cabal of party leaders, were responsible for the grenade bombing that killed nine people and wounded more than a hundred others.,The bombing crippled the leadership of the Liberal Party. It left Salonga among those severely wounded, and Salonga's survival and restoration to health were nothing short of a miracle.

In his book, Salonga concluded that Sison plotted the bombing in order to intensify the conflict between President Ferdinand Marcos' Nacionalista Party and the opposition Liberal Party—with the LP blaming Marcos for trying to exterminate the opposition—and to enhance the prospects of a revolutionary takeover.

Salonga based his conclusion mainly on the book of Gregg Jones, the Washington Post journalist who wrote in his book published in 1992 that Sison and his cabal were behind the bombing, and on other sources, among them, accounts of Victor Corpuz, who defected from the military to join the New People's Army.

The strength of Salonga's book does not lie in going over old grounds covered by historical scholarship. It comes from the fact that he was a victim of the bombing, but despite this, he has come to recognize the weight of evidence pointing to the culpability of Sison et al. In accepting this version, Salonga shed off the long-accepted belief that Marcos was responsible for the massacre.

Although Jones' book is the main basis of Salonga's thesis, the first book did not have as much impact as Salonga's because Salonga was a victim who repudiated his old view of the event and he has a lot of credibility. Salonga's book shows him coming to terms with the truth, even if that means revising his views. That is intellectual honesty of the highest order.

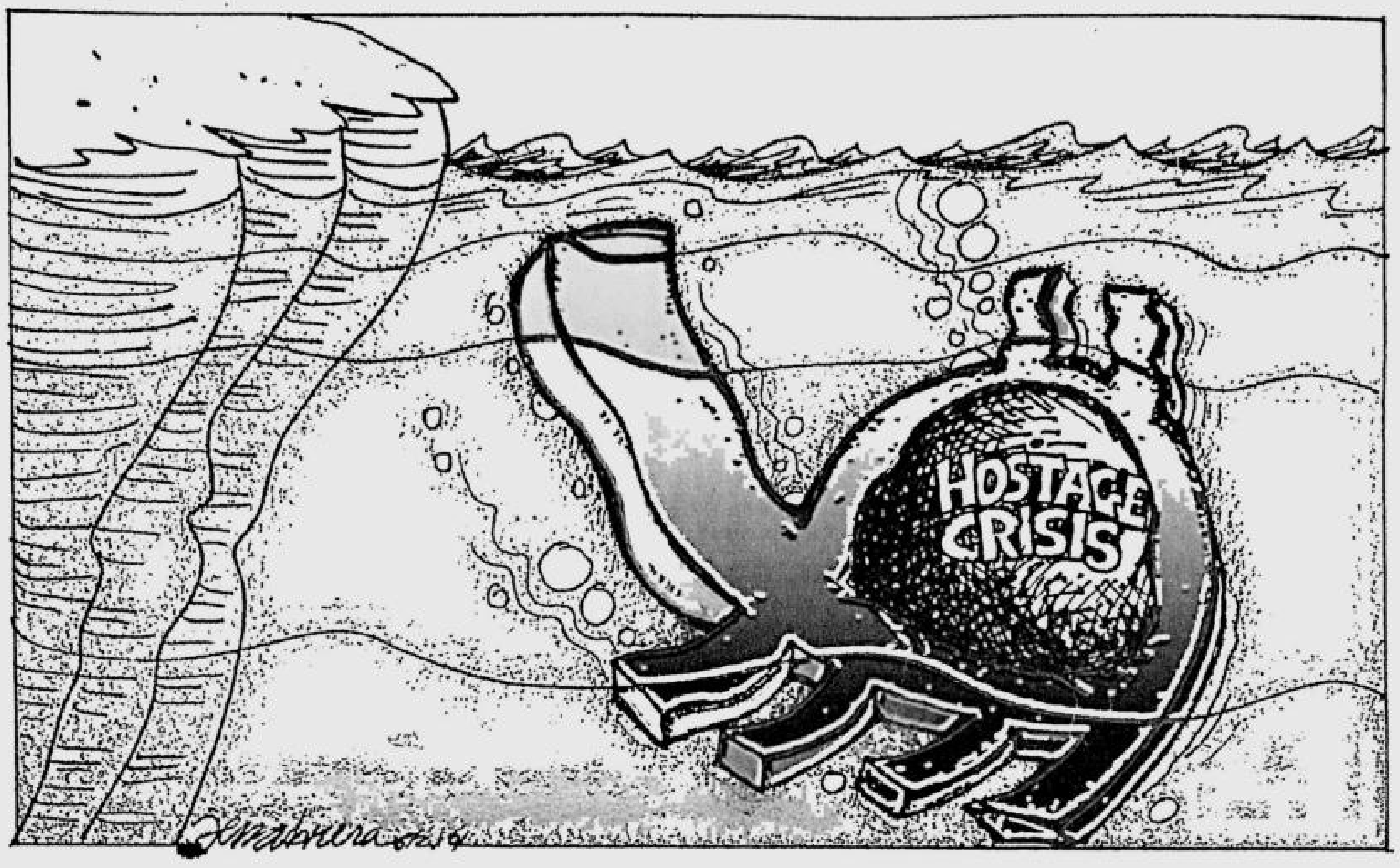
Salonga's memoirs push further down the road the revisionist tendency that seeks to give a fresh look at the events of the past three decades with which the Filipino people have not yet come to terms. Among these traumatic events are torture and gross violations of human rights unleashed by the Marcos dictatorship. The nation is mocked, for example, by the electoral rehabilitation of the most feared among Marcos' agents, among them Gregorio Honasan, Panfilo Lacson and the assassinated Cagayan Rep. Rodolfo Aguinaldo.

Among the first to praise Salonga's revision was the Marcos family. Salonga, who was one of the Filipino leaders persecuted by Marcos, does not need the family's praise. Truth has a way of bringing reconciliation, but the Marcoses have not yet come to terms with their responsibility for the massive plunder of the nation during the dictator's term.

Sison has reacted as vehemently to Salonga's book as he did to Jones' book. He has even gone to the extent of accusing Salonga of being bought by the Marcoses and acting as an agent of the CIA. The latter is standard leftist claptrap. Sison's charges are unworthy of consideration since they are no more than name-calling. Salonga's book is about evidence. Until Sison can offer new countervailing evidence, the memoirs will have more credence than his sweeping denials.

History is always open to revision, but the exoneration of Marcos for responsibility in the bombing does not absolve him from the more aggravating aspects of his dictatorship.

Salonga wrote his memoirs in his twilight years. If he had not produced the book, what he knew and what he studied would have been lost in the mist of history. In a country where few leaders write serious memoirs, Salonga's book is a valuable contribution to the search for the truth about one of the most turbulent episodes of Philippine democracy.



Tax on text

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE PHILIPPINE government is perennially short of money principally because: (1) Not enough taxes are being collected; (2) Taxes already collected are stolen by the tax collectors; and (3) Funds for government projects are stolen by government officials. Every year, the budget gets bigger but the government doesn't know where to get the money to cover the budget.

Here are two tips on how the government can earn billions of pesos more to support itself. Here's the first:

Doubtless you have seen employees at their desks absorbed with their cell phones, students in school doing the same thing, commuters on the streets and in public transport also doing the same thing. They are all busily sending text messages through their cell phones.

Every day, millions of man-hours are lost through this fad. Every day, students, instead of studying, waste their time texting away.

What messages do they send? Mostly useless things like gossip, jokes, false messages, silly comments. (A notable exception was People Power II which was initially called together through text messages.) At least 10 million text messages are sent and received daily. Some have useful purposes but most of the others we can do without. Texting has become a bad habit, like smoking, drinking and gambling.

So why not impose a tax on texting, the same way we do on cigarettes, liquor and gambling? Don't tax the phone conversations, only the texting. That will discourage useless texting and save precious man-hours. People will send text messages only when they are important. And it will earn the government at least P1 billion a year.

Make the tax rate graduated. The first 30 or 50 messages a month will be free. Then as you send more and more text messages, the rate gradually increases like your electric bill. The more electricity you consume, the higher the rate; the more text messages you send, the higher the rate. You don't want to pay so much on text taxes? Then control your itchy fingers.

The beauty of this tax on text is that like the withholding tax, it will be easy to collect. All text messages are recorded by the cell phone company. All it has to do is compute the tax due and add it to the subscriber's phone bill. Once paid, the company can remit the amount to the government—after deducting a collection commission for itself.

Like the taxes on cigarettes, liquor and gambling, the tax on text can be called a "sin tax." It will discourage a bad habit. And while doing so, it will earn money for the government.

* * *

Here's the second tip:

Do you know that if only half of the traffic fines for all traffic violations are collected, the amount will pay for the salaries of all traffic policemen in the country and still leave about P1 billion for the Treasury? The best part is that drivers will learn to obey traffic rules and that will improve traffic flow. Gradually, as drivers get more disciplined, collections from traffic fines will diminish, but we get that back from the saved man-hours that would otherwise be lost in the gridlocks.

It's as simple as ABC: Enforce traffic rules strictly and fine all violators, driver and pedestrian alike. The problem now is that when traffic enforcers arrest erring drivers, the fines go into their pockets, not to the government. Or they just close their eyes to the violations because they already got their daily *tong* from the drivers' associations.

The biggest mistake committed by the government was when it transformed the former metro aides into traffic aides. The intention was laudable: to keep the former street sweepers employed. But it made the streets dirtier and the traffic situation messier.

Most of the traffic aides don't know traffic rules and so they are not sure of themselves when confronting erring drivers. When a driver snarls, they back off. So they avoid confrontation by pretending not to see traffic violations or traffic snarls. They confine themselves to standing in the middle of the street and waving vehicles on when the vehicles are already moving as fast as the traffic will allow.

Only a few days ago, I saw a blue-shirted traffic aide at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Tandang Sora in Quezon City, below the flyover. This is a No Loading/Unloading Zone, but commuters were gathered around him waiting for their ride, and buses and jeepneys were blocking the intersection (in spite of the yellow boxes) while loading and unloading passengers. The waiting shed only a few meters away was empty. Yet the traffic aide was not doing anything except wave his arms, but none of the PU drivers were obeying him.

I stopped and asked him why he did not order the commuters to wait at the waiting shed so the buses and jeepneys would stop there instead of at the corner.

"*Ayaw sumunod, eh,*" he replied and looked down, obviously embarrassed.

The point of this anecdote is that you can't expect the lowly traffic aide to enforce traffic rules without being backed by regular traffic policemen. Drivers and commuters are not afraid of them. They know they have no power to arrest. What's more, some of them have learned to extort bribe money.

True, the Philippine National Police lacks regular traffic policemen. But if it hires more, the fines collected from traffic violators would be more than enough to pay their salaries.

* * *

Comments are welcome at asiseeit@pacific.net.ph

Potpourri

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

PAYING ransom to the Abu Sayyaf may seem innocent enough, but it is not. It is a selfish and criminal act that gravely endangers huge numbers of people. Those who assist in paying ransom, negotiate it or provide it when the government has a "no-ransom policy" are, under these circumstances, accessories to terrorist activities. Isn't it time the government showed its resolve by monitoring and, wherever possible, preventing these transactions?

Harmless ransom? The P40 million reportedly paid in ransom so far in the current round of Abu Sayyaf kidnappings alone will pay the wages of 111 terrorists for a year at the reported rate of P30,000 a month. That's a hefty incentive for more, and more sophisticated, kidnappings.

The terrorists can opt instead to invest the fruit of their extortion in over a thousand pieces of M-16s. Alternatively, the money can buy some four million pieces of ammunition. That's a lot of firepower that isn't going to be displayed in some museum but will be actually used to kill others. And to make matters worse, since the source of some of this weaponry is going to be purloined government stocks, it will simultaneously weaken our own military resources while strengthening the Abu Sayyaf's. Ransom is the bride of death.

Already, ransom from previous incidents has given the terrorists a sophistication which the government's forces lack: high-powered engines powering fast boats, high-tech communication systems, superior anti-personnel and armor-penetrating weapons. They already have the rudiments of a navy and an army. Keep the ransom payments up and they'll soon have a bare-bones air force of their own.

The solution seems clear. Identify the victims and their financial status and ability. Monitor family communications and bank accounts by getting, when necessary, court orders to do so. Follow the activities of known negotiators and go-betweens. Stop the payment of ransom. It is time to be serious about the "no ransom policy." Or is it all just masses and masses of words?

* * *

There is obviously an unprecedented crime wave rippling through the country, and only the Philippine National Police seems oblivious of it. They seem to be more intent on keeping their jobs than on protecting the public. One instance of this attitude is their propensity to fish out crime statistics that show a purported "downward trend" in crime incidents. If these statistics were accurate—and that would fly in the face of common experience—all it would prove is that fewer and fewer of us are bothering to report crimes to the police.

Why should we? They don't get solved if we do. We waste enormous time and money filing the report, not excluding having to give the usual gratuity requested by many policemen to induce them to solve the crime. Instead of catching cellphone snatchers and arresting fences, the police have the audacity to issue brochures telling people how to use cellphones safely. Hey, we ought to be able to use those phones the same way they do all over the rest of the world: without fear. In brief, the police is blaming the victims instead of catching the criminals.

While we are on the subject, why are no big-time fences ever arrested and charged, just petty criminals? No fences, no market; no market, no crime. But whether it is car parts or cellular phones, we do not exactly have Muntinlupa bursting with convicted fences. Or is the PNP telling us that organized crime does not exist or, if it does, they don't have a clue as to who the fences are?

Never in my lifetime has peace and order been so bad, and the PNP can have their cloudcuckooland statistics for breakfast, thank you. Kidnapping in public places in broad daylight. Widespread robberies of banks and of users of automated teller machines. Cellphone snatchers. Bus, jeepney and FX stick-ups with the robbers bringing sacks to put in the loot. Brazen carnapping and theft of car accessories like spare tires and stereos right in front of police stations. Restaurant hold-ups, like the North Park incident. Roadblock robberies and shootings, including those on major thoroughfares like C-5. House break-ins and murders become commonplace. One of my own employees was robbed and almost killed last week (he says that he didn't waste his time by reporting it).

If this keeps up, the President should revamp the structure and staffing of the police. It's not just the Abu Sayyaf, it's about safety in our very homes and streets. Enough already.

* * *

Whoever drafted that reported new tariff on books ought to be fired for gross stupidity. It's as stupid as taxing Internet use in order to encourage competitiveness. We already face huge challenges on information, education and globalization. People are not buying books; with the exchange rate, they have become too expensive. And yet the only way to learn more and improve ourselves is by encouraging more reading. As for the deficit, the infinitesimal increase in revenues gathered from this tariff will pale in comparison to the damage done to the country by taxing, and therefore further discouraging, learning. It is idiotic.

Taxes aren't just about revenues; they are principally about economic policy and encouraging growth. Can our new Finance Secretary Lito Camacho look into this matter and give us sensible relief?

* * *

These are, as we predicted at the President's assumption of office, extraordinarily difficult times. We are beset by grievous problems of every kind. It is a time when we need to give the President our full support, even in those instances when we may have doubts about this or that decision. As one poster famously says, we may have arrived on different ships but we are all in the same boat now.'

Congress leadership fights should be decided fast

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

PRESIDENT Macapagal and her officials theorize that the recent spate of kidnappings could be part of a grand destabilization plot by certain elements. I think many citizens will agree, though it also cannot be denied that prospects of huge ransoms by victims constitute a magnet for the kidnapping syndicates. The government just has to put an end to their evil designs. The police led by PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza and the intelligence agencies have to put their heads together and stop these nefarious activities especially since they are affecting the economy.

* * *

The battles for the leadership of the Senate and the House of Representatives should not be allowed to drag while the nation faces grave crises that need the attention of everyone. The people will not look kindly on such partisan strifes. They want the members of Congress to concentrate at this point on how best to help President Macapagal overcome the various crises. In the House, for instance, the question should simply be who can best deliver the needed legislation to help the country. Let's stop this stupid debate over "good *trapo*" and "bad *trapo*."

* * *

Former Speaker Joe de Venecia has a solid performance record. It was under his leadership that the House was able to pass 228 crucial economic and social reform laws, 70 of them in the economic field. The results were specially evident in the banking sector as the Philippines was the least affected by the Asian financial crisis. Of course, among these Asian countries we subsequently had the slowest recovery, but that was due to other factors, among them the reign of Joseph Estrada.

De Venecia can deliver results for Ms Macapagal. Besides, he has the support of the majority in Lakas, which controls 83 seats (40 percent) in the House, 33 governors (40 percent) and 56 city and NCR mayors (49 percent). He also has the support of the Nationalist People's Coalition, the second biggest political party, which has 52 House members, 18 governors and 16 city and NCR mayors. By contrast, the Liberal Party, from which De Venecia's strongest rival, Batanes Rep. Butch Abad, comes, has only 20 House seats, three governors and four city/NCR mayors.

With the support of these two big political groups, De Venecia should bag the speakership. Let's not prolong that battle as there are very serious problems for us to tackle.

* * *

In the Senate, the 11 People Power Coalition senators obviously have enough votes, with the help of two independents, such as Ramon Revilla and Robert Jaworski, to capture the Senate presidency. Rivals Franklin Drilon and Rene Cayetano have agreed that whoever gets 13 votes should automatically be the PPC candidate. Will Senate Chief Nene Pimentel join this covenant?

Edgardo Angara's LDP faction has five members (Angara himself, Teresa Oreta, Rodolfo Biazon, Vicente Sotto and Blas Ople). Together with new Puwersa ng Masa senators, Loi Estrada, Gregorio Honasan and Panfilo Lacson, the opposition has eight votes. But it's difficult to see it gaining five more to bag the top Senate post.

* * *

Last Tuesday, I promised to reprint the piece written by Frank Laubach, an American who served in Mindanao in the 1930s before heading for India at the request of Mahatma Ghandi. Laubach wrote "Life Begins at 80," which was cited by former Senate President Jovito Salonga in his remarks at last Sunday's launch of his memoirs (he turns 81 tomorrow). Laubach's piece reads:

"Once you reach 80, everyone wants to carry your baggage and help you up the steps. If you forget your name or an appointment, or your telephone number, or you can't remember how many grandchildren you have, you need only explain that you are 80. Being 80 is a lot better than being 70. At 70, people are mad at you for everything. At 80, you have a perfect excuse, no matter what you do. If you act foolishly, it's your second childhood. If you survive until you're 80, everybody is surprised that you are still alive. They treat you with respect just for having lived so long. Actually, they seem surprised that you can walk and talk sensibly. So, please, folks, try to make it to 80. It's the best time of life. People forgive you for anything. If you ask me, life begins at 80."

* * *

Despite all our problems, books are being launched. Which is great, as they are often a source of strength and wisdom. This afternoon, at 4 p.m. at the National Library on T. M. Kalaw Street in Ermita, Manila, a book on former President Fidel V. Ramos, "FVR Through the Years, Part II," written by Ben Cal will be launched. The former president will be signing copies for his admirers and deliver some remarks. For reservations call 887-8964.

* * *

Earlier I wrote about the trip to Tripoli, Libya, of the government delegation, led by Vice President Tito Guingona, for talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, with the foreign ministers of Indonesia and Malaysia in attendance. I termed the new round of talks "Tripoli II," for back in the mid-'70s, the government held talks in the same city with the Moro National Liberation Front. The earlier talks produced the Tripoli Agreement of 1976, and later the Jakarta Accord of 1996 which saw the MNLF laying down its arms and its chair Nur Misuari running unopposed as first governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. The participants in Tripoli II are hoping that a similar accord will be arrived at with the MILF.

* * *

The government's relationship with the MNLF has been far from perfect, but the same can be said about the MNLF leadership. Last April Misuari was "promoted" to the rank of "chairman emeritus" by the MNLF central committee, though some plainly say he was ousted from the top post and replaced by a 15-member Executive Council led by Farouk Hussin, the MNLF chief for foreign affairs. Misuari has appealed his removal before the Organization of Islamic Conference which still recognizes him.

But imperfect relationships are still better than outright conflict, and Tripoli II leaves us all hopeful that the desire for lasting peace and development would be strong among the MILF leaders. Not only that, let's hope that the MILF leaders will emulate the example of many MNLF leaders who have since joined the Philippine government. One of them is Hussin, who was named by Ms Macapagal as presidential adviser for Muslim Mindanao Concerns. Other MNLF leaders opted to enter the political arena, like MNLF secretary general Muslimin Sema and chief of staff Yusuf Jikiri who were elected mayor of Cotabato City and governor of Sulu, respectively, last May. Another MNLF leader, Commander Ali Solitario, is the newly elected mayor of Marawi City.

Jackie at the White House

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

DRAWING crowds at the Metropolitan Museum in New York is an exhibit called "Jackie Kennedy: The White House Years." The exhibit focuses not on the historical events of that period, or even the role Jackie Kennedy played in transforming the "institution" of first lady. Rather, the centerpiece of this crowd-drawer is a collection of dresses. Yes, dresses.

In the years before she became Jackie O, Jackie Kennedy claimed the imagination and maybe even infatuation of a nation that was eager to embrace the new regime of youth, glamour and vigor personified by "Jack and Jackie" and their young family.

But while Jack Kennedy created the myth of the Camelot years with charm, oratory and liberal politics, Jackie wove dreams of sophistication and class that told Americans they were on par with even the oldest cultures of the world by sheer personal style and charisma. This she did, judging from the exhibit, through calibrated and careful planning. Even as a young woman, Jacqueline Bouvier already showed great confidence in her own taste, enough to allow for occasional quirkiness. By the time she entered the White House as America's youngest first lady, she had acquired enough poise and experience in public life to want to bring a touch of originality and daring to her public image as well as her role.

* * *

"JACKIE KENNEDY: The White House Years" may have focused on the gowns, dresses, suits and even loungewear and sports wear that Jackie wore in her brief tenure as first lady. But through the fashion, we do get a glimpse and understanding of the politics and culture of the period, as well as her legacy, especially the way she changed the image of first lady from dowdy consort to a partner and even symbol of a presidency.

Jack Kennedy may have been joking when he described himself as "the man who escorted Jackie Kennedy in Paris," but the statement bore an acknowledgement that a "decorative" first lady could accomplish miracles which diplomacy alone could not have made possible.

The outfits, on faceless mannequins and accompanied by photographs of official and family events where they were worn, are themselves remarkable replicas of simplicity and timelessness. Any present-day fashionista could wear any of these outfits and still feel in the cutting edge of style. Of course, as we commented, one would have to have been Jackie to do justice to them.

As the captions explain, the early outfits were created by French couture houses, especially her favorite designers Givenchy and Balenciaga. Bowing to patriotic sentiments, though, she began asking American designers to create outfits for her, even if it meant "knocking off" French originals and adding her own requirements and quirky touches, such as ribbons and peek-a-boo cutouts.

* * *

BY THE TIME she led the TV-viewing public on an unprecedented tour through the renovated interiors of the White House, Jackie had already instilled in the American people a new appreciation for their own culture and heritage. Americans need not apologize for who or what they were, seemed to be her message. And through such subtle gestures as inviting African-American artists and entertainers to White House galas, she and her husband also managed to score "political" points without provoking undue controversy.

Perhaps one lesson one can take from a walk through this exhibit, crowded with museum-goers even on a late weekend afternoon, is that there are many ways to make "political" statements, even if this be through fashion or family life.

Jackie Kennedy, during the White House years, was as much a politician as her husband. And in her own fashionable and tasteful way, she created a great part of the Kennedy legacy that people, even those of us living far away, still remember when we look back on those years of Camelot.

* * *

WE'D have wanted to wait until the official tally was released and the winners of the party-list elections were proclaimed before making any statement. But since my arrival from the States, almost everyone I've met has asked what happened to Abanse! Pinay and how it fared in the elections.

Well, it seems safe to say that with less than the estimated number of votes required to make the 2 percent requirement, Abanse! Pinay will not be returning to the House of Representatives. But after conferring and meeting with the party-list group's leaders, the consensus is that this is not the time yet for Abanse! Pinay to fold up its tents and slink away.

The need for and right of women to get more involved in mainstream politics remains, and organizing work among women, especially in grass-roots communities, must continue. While the party structure and organization will remain, the national secretariat is studying ways of working with members of Congress as well as local governments on the crafting of gender-sensitive legislation and policies. And of course, lobbying for laws addressing women's issues, many of them already begun by Abanse! Pinay in the House, will continue and intensify.

At this point, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has helped and supported Abanse! Pinay. Not just in the last campaign, but since its founding in 1997 and through the two electoral contests in which we participated. Thank you especially to the many volunteers and staff who contributed their time and effort to spread the word, to supporters who helped fuel our humble campaign with donations of cash, campaign materials and facilities, and media people who helped Abanse! Pinay get its message across to as many people as possible.

And to all those who voted for Abanse! Pinay—women and men—immeasurable thanks for your faith and goodwill, your trust and your friendship.

We are calling for a national council meeting next month, after which we will host a thanksgiving party for our many friends. Please watch this corner for details.

Beloved 'ingrata'

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

INGRATA. That was how former Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Cecilia Muñoz-Palma (1973-1978) was harshly called by a high government official. Ingrate. Ungrateful. The Spanish word reeks of contempt and condescension. Like, you do not bite the hand that fed you.

When said in Filipino it sounds a bit different. *Walang utang na loob*. There is anger, yes, but there could be a hint of hurt there. A person who receives help or is accorded honors, even if she deserves them, is presumed to be deeply indebted and when the time comes, is expected to stand by the favor- or honor-giver. Only the brave in our culture—and in our government—would dare go against this onerous unwritten contract.

But we are not wanting in brave and debt-defying civil servants. One of them is Muñoz-Palma, now 87, the first woman to sit in the Supreme Court. Although the appointing power in her case happened to be a dictator, Ferdinand E. Marcos, she showed him and the sycophants that she owed him nothing. She owed only God and the Filipino people whom she had sworn to serve. By defying expectations and pursuing the rule of law as her conscience dictated, all the more it was evident that this gentle and soft-spoken Batangueña was destined to sit above the throng.

Well, *ingrata* because as an associate justice speaking before her peers and members of the bar on the occasion of Law Day, she pleaded for the return of the rule of law. That was in 1975, the third year of martial rule and the lady told her audience: "We shall be judged by history...not by what we want to do and can't, (but) by what we ought to do and don't."

For her guts, she received a five-minute standing ovation. But Justice Secretary Vicente Abad Santos was neither pleased nor amused. He remained seated. *Ingrata*, he called her.

She took that as a compliment, a badge of courage.

Again, *ingrata* because she wrote a dissenting opinion on the habeas corpus case of nationalist former Sen. Jose W. Diokno. Her opinion would have had embarrassed Marcos but before it could be presented, it was "frustrated." Without meaning to, Muñoz-Palma's written opinion (that had leaked) jumped the gun on the other justices and Marcos too, and paved the way for the release of Diokno who had been detained for more than 700 days without charges.

Muñoz-Palma called the Diokno case her baptism of fire. And although her dissenting opinion did not see the full light of day as the habeas corpus petition became moot and academic with Diokno's sudden release, it illumined the legal path during those dark and dreadful days. That "frustrated dissenting opinion" can now be read in full in her book "The Mirror of My Soul: Selected Decisions, Opinions, Speeches and Writings" (883 pages!) which she recently launched and gave away for free on the occasion of the Supreme Court's 100th anniversary.

Her opinion on the Diokno case (with which Associate Justice Calixto Zaldivar concurred) is simple enough for non-lawyers to appreciate but it emits a luminous glow if read in the context of those dark years. She ended it by defending woman power thus: "In closing, I am bothered by the thought that some of my colleagues may attribute my approach to Diokno's petition to my being a woman, and I may even be accused of allowing my emotions to overpower my reason. If there is such an assumption, I would say that it is incorrect. However, if it is indeed true that my being a woman led me to take this stand...then I am happy and proud that I was born a woman."

More riveting is the introduction to that case where Muñoz-Palma describes how she wrote it while in hiding and how she later cloistered herself among the Benedictines of St. Scholastica's College, her alma mater. (She was valedictorian of HS '31, after which she went to UP for law studies. She passed the bar in 1937.) If at all she gave in to a colleague who knew what she was up to, it was to erase the words "arbitrary and oppressive."

There was life after the Supreme Court. Muñoz-Palma led the anti-Marcos opposition and ran in the 1984 Batasan Pambansa elections and won by a landslide. Her battle cry: "One Marcos cannot stop us all." She later became the president of the Constitutional Commission that drafted the 1987 Constitution. More recently, despite asthma and all, she headed the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office where she again displayed her being *ingrata* when she did not cover up for the alleged wrongdoing of the president who appointed her.

"The Mirror of My Soul" packs courage. Also included are tributes. Said the late Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan: "I can still see her standing on the floor of the Batasan...No one can equal the passion with which she fought Amendment No. 6—that curse of presidential usurpation of legislative powers. She was also one of the few among us who dared file articles of impeachment against the then head of government."

Muñoz-Palma warns her readers that in her book they "will not find literary gems or grandiose or loftily worded judicial and legal pronouncements" but "plain words...thoughts and ideas and principles emanating from my conscience and reason on faith, truth, justice, freedom and the Rule of Law."

The rule of law—these words are like her mantra. If her opus were a symphony, that would be the theme. Her "A Plea for the Rule of Law" that earned her the *ingrata* label (and where she also said much about womanhood) is a good read. But one can't miss the spiritual theme that also runs through her writing. These two themes mirror her soul. Or to put it another way, in her soul, these two themes are mirrored. Indeed, in her life, this woman has always hearkened to a higher power, a higher law.

Read her book and be convinced that *ingrata* means brave.

Holding back

Jan Adversario

PEOPLE I know cannot understand why I have second thoughts about going to the United States. Most of my friends urge me to work on my papers at once and leave the country. In response, I usually tell them, "Would you want to buy my birthright for half a million pesos and have the chance of going there instead?" And they would roll their eyes, as if to say, "You sure would be missing a lot."

YOUNGBLOOD

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

Come to think of it, they're probably right. Who knows what I would become if I put those documents in order and left for the States before I turned 21? But there are a lot of things that are holding me back—things that I hold dear and which may not be worth everything that staying in the United States promises.

My mother left for the United States when I was barely 3. A public school teacher, she dreamt of improving our family's status. My father, a government employee, took care of my elder sister and me while Mama explored the West.

Papa was able to send us to good schools and provide for our needs. I never thought we were poor. Whatever we desired was always there without argument. And I always thought that Mama was a huge success in the United States and sending tons of money for our education.

But I was wrong. I later found out that she seldom sent money and when she did, it wasn't enough for our expanding needs.

When I was growing up, I started to understand the intricacies of our family life. But I remained a child, unwilling to get involved with the problems our family faced.

At one point, we transferred to my grandparents' house to relieve ourselves of the burden paying for the mortgage on our lot. Soon after, we moved back to our house, which had been divided after the bank foreclosed on the mortgage.

That was when I told myself that Mama was a failure. She was unable to secure our lot and wasn't fulfilling her obligations as a mother. The only consolation she could offer was the petition to bring us to the United States which she sent when we were in high school.

Oh, how I felt good when I read the petition. I envisioned myself walking streets paved with gold and looking up at skyscrapers that almost touched the sky. I would be dressed like New Yorkers in black trench coats, Armani suits, silk ties, etc.

My father, being a principled and intelligent man, was always selfless and sacrificing. He told us that we could go wherever we wanted, explore the horizon and conquer the world. His only request was that we finish our college studies before we left the country.

And that was exactly what we intended to do: get a degree and fly away to the United States!

I left our house for a distant college as some kind of escape from our humble household, but I was determined to earn a degree so that I could help turn our family's fortune around.

My older sister, meanwhile, breezed through her studies in a local university, completing her four-year course in three years. Unable to find a decent job, she left for the United States a few months after graduation.

Like Mama, my sister was a dreamer. I was amazed by her plans: to rebuild the once comfortable house we had, help me financially so I could finish my studies, and buy me a state-of-the-art personal computer.

All those plans never became a reality. I learned that soon after she reached the United States, she secretly tied the knot with another Filipino.

I was furious at her. I felt betrayed, deceived. I hated the idea that she would be starting her own family without helping solve some of our problems. Months passed before I spoke with her again.

Now, the land of promise has taken away two persons I love. Perhaps this is one reason I feel that I should stay. I am probably afraid that one day, I too would develop an amnesia about the sweet, impoverished life we have after being blinded by the riches of a different country.

Papa always tells me that he will never get in the way of my career, that I should decide whatever will be best for me. He tells me not to worry about leaving him alone in this country. But I simply cannot do that to a man who has supported his children with great devotion.

Perhaps it is not anything material that is holding me back—just my sentiments. Maybe I'll never get over them, but this is what I am.

In April this year, I obtained my degree. Nevertheless, the thought of landing a good job after graduating from the country's premiere university keeps me from seeing straight. Despite my doubts, I just might decide someday to go to the United States. Then maybe, just maybe, I would realize that my friends were right.

Jan Adversario, 20, has a BS Development Communication degree from the University of the Philippines, Los Baños.

Dad

Julienne Gayle Caringal

"YOU live under my roof, so have to live by my rules. When you graduate you can do whatever you want." This is my Dad's famous line every time we disagree an certain matters.

Dads are strange. They cuddle you like a baby, even spoonfeed you at times. They cover you with their wings and won't let you fly on your own to experience new things. They are more afraid of the cruel world than you are because the truth is, you are more than eager to explore what the world has to offer and eventually meet its challenges. They want you to have a strong personality and stand by what you believe in.

When dads give advice, it is a command for you to obey or you will end up arguing. But it's a verbal battle you can never win. So you have to be strong-willed and determined to defend yourself without engaging in an argument with them. You listen to what they have to say but when you speak they don't listen. So how do you begin to stand by what you believe in? Ironic!

Dads can also get very strict. They won't allow you to go to parties unescorted and expect you to be home by midnight. When you go out with your friends, you are allowed to check out after lunch but you must check in before dinner. Someone has to bring you to your destination and pick you up after a couple of short hours.

While you are having fun at the mall, your mobile phone suddenly rings and it's your dad checking on you, asking your whereabouts and reminding you of the time. Whenever a guy calls you up, even friends he personally knows, he sits beside you, pretending not to be listening and you know it's time to hang up. Right after you put down the phone, he starts asking questions like who the guy is, who his parents are and so on and so forth. Seems like an investigation.

When he notices that you are still up at an ungodly hour, he tells you to stop whatever you are doing and insists that you go to sleep, even if you're working on a paper that you have to submit at eight in the morning. Makes you wonder if his dad was like him or if all dads are like him.

I used to stay at a dormitory (exclusively for girls of course) on the university campus. It was run by nuns, curfew hour was at nine in the evening and there were rules and regulations that had to be strictly followed. It was just like staying in your own house with someone looking after you.

After a year of begging, my Dad allowed me to stay in a dormitory off the school campus. This meant that I had to do things on my own, like budget my allowance, cook food for my ever hungry stomach, clean my "small house," keep track of my own time and make all those little decisions on my own which will prepare me when I start working and face the cruel world. Thus, I will learn to be responsible for myself and for my actions.

Although my Dad allowed me to live on my own, it was not totally. I know he will still interfere with my life, we will still disagree and I will always hear his famous line. But for sure, I will have to prove to him that I am worthy of his trust.

Well, my Dad may be weird but I know he truly loves me, and I'm proud to be his "little girl." It's amazing that I am slowly getting to be just like him!

Julienne Gayle Caringal, 18, is taking up AB Communication at the De La Salle University-Dasmariñas.

Brave new worlds

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

MARSHALL McLuhan once said that we tend to look at the world from a rearview mirror. In many ways, he was right. The capacity to change is not strong in most of us, and old habits keep binding us to the past like a ball and chain. I know some people who continue to use the typewriter to this day, forsaking convenience (which they readily agree is there in the PC) for the comfort of the familiar and reliable. It's not just traditional farmers whose determination to hold on to old ways, notwithstanding being shown new and better farming methods, is boundless. It's most of us.

Technology is moving rapidly and is changing the world by the hour—by the minute or second, with the current digital revolution—but we continue to look at the world through the prism of old ways. That point has been driven home to me by several things over the past few years.

Take the case of recorded music. Most of us still think of recorded music as a vinyl record, a cassette tape or a CD. That is to say, it is something that can be played only if you have a vinyl record, a cassette tape or a CD. That is no longer so. As most kids know these days, music can exist independently of them. Music is no longer a sound that is imbedded in a vinyl record, a cassette tape or CD, it is a **file**—in the same way that a manuscript is a file (a Word file) or a picture is a file (a JPEG file)—that can exist in cyberspace, that can be transferred from place to place (a hard disc, an MP3 player, a regular blank compact disc), and played on various programs.

Transferring music to a CD, as anyone who owns a CD Writer knows, is the easiest thing in the world. "Transfer" is the word. It is not recording music, the way people used to do when they copied music from a vinyl record to a cassette. It is copying music files, the way people copy Word files from one disk or diskette to another. That is what makes the copy an exact clone. These days the transferring has become extremely fast. Many CD Writers are now able to copy things at the speed of 16 times. That is to say, an hour's worth of music can be copied in four minutes or so. At this rate, the copying is bound to become instantaneous in the next few years.

The same is true of pictures. Pictures you used to think of too as something you put in albums or frames till they crease and turn gray from time and touch. The digital revolution has altered everything there. In case you don't know it yet (but the kids who have been downloading dirty pictures from the Internet know it only too well), it's the easiest thing in the world now to send pictures to your family and friends in America through cyberspace. All you do is scan the pictures, turn them into files, and send them by e-mail. You can even send video clips and get the same family and friends to watch it in so-called "streaming video." These days in fact, you don't need to have pictures developed in the shops. If you are using a digital camera or camcorder, you can transfer your footage to a hard disc, edit it, and if you don't like it at all, delete it.

The same is also true of books, although that is more controversial. I remember receiving a couple of e-mails after delivering a speech on reading at the Ateneo last year. I said in that speech that the PC was discouraging reading, and that books remained the best way by which people talked to each other. The letter-writers said it was not entirely so: the PC itself was a source of reading material, and could in fact be a repository of books. In future, they said, novels and essays will be stored in portable PCs, with more eye-friendly monitors, and can read from them. You can lug a whole library around with you in a PC the size of a Palm. That, of course, is for people who do not want sound and pictures to go along with their novels.

None of this is to say that we should scorn the things of the past and embrace the new ones without a thought. I personally like looking at old photographs, particularly the ones they took before World War II, the ones where people dressed up for posterity, the men striking a pose with their medals and wearing frowns and the women striking a pose with their dresses and wearing coquettish smiles. I like the feel of old records, quite apart from the sound of them (even the monaural ones), and find it therapeutic to wash them and dry them with soft cloth. I like the smell of books, which quite incidentally, was what John Updike said in a beautiful essay in defense of books. Nothing beats the smell of the paper of a freshly printed book. Books also have the virtue, he added, of discouraging divorces and separations by making it difficult for couples to figure out how they are going to divide their collective libraries.

But this is to say that we should not be closed to new, and better, ways of doing things. The world did not stop in our generation, and there are limits to the pleasures of listening to "oldies." Quite incidentally, I saw an MP3 disc a couple of months ago that advertised itself as "oldies," and it included Pearl Jam. What does that make of us, Jurassic? Put another way, all this is to say that we should look at the arguably dizzying pace of change not as a threat but as an opportunity. Not as things that defeat our sense of touch altogether, but as things that offer new tactile—or indeed other sense—impressions. The people who now think MP3s and JPEGs are just ugly monstrosities forget that people who loved live orchestras and paintings once thought of recorded music and photographs as vulgar aberrations.

I suppose the trick lies in having one foot—or ear—in the past and one in the future. The present, as someone said, is just the fork in the road between past and future. I suppose the trick lies in having a tremendous appreciation for the lushness of the creations of yesterday while keeping an eye—or ear, or nose, or tongue, or skin—open to the possibilities of tomorrow. And while at it playing host to a boundless sense of humor and a discriminating taste.

After all, not all that is new is necessarily better. Vinyl by far is better sounding than CDs. And books are by far better looking than a PC monitor.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

ROTC

EVERY Saturday morning thousands of families all over the Philippines wake up mumbling and grumbling about the ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps). They have no choice: to graduate from college, males have to report to school and march under the sun every Saturday for two years.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

We borrowed the ROTC from the United States, where it was first instituted in 1916. The first Philippine ROTC was set up in 1922, at the University of the Philippines, an optional offering for students. As its name implies, the idea was to train male university students to be prepared to defend the country. In case war broke out, these reserve officers could be called into service to provide competent leadership.

The ROTC was never made compulsory in the United States but we just had to be more American than the Americans. In 1939 President Manuel Quezon issued an executive order requiring the ROTC for all physically fit males.

How has the ROTC fared in terms of military preparedness? In the United States, study after study has shown that the ROTC isn't very useful. Whenever war broke out, there weren't that many more reserve officers who came forward to serve, and those who did were mediocre as officers. The best officers still came from the military academies. In a word, these reserve officers were half-baked.

I suspect if we did similar studies in the Philippines, we would have even more dismal results. *Hilaw* (completely uncooked) would be a better word to describe the products of this training. The ROTC and, incidentally, its high school counterpart CMT (Citizens Military Training) are all farce.

It's not surprising then that even university administrators are now questioning the ROTC. Last month the University Belt Consortium came out with a strong statement, "The ROTC: Excising a Cancer," calling for its abolition. The consortium consists of nine universities, including, appropriately, the Manuel L. Quezon University, named after the Father of Philippine ROTC.

The consortium statement was spurred mainly by the kidnapping and murder of UST student Mark Chua. Last year, Chua filed a complaint about irregularities against the UST Department of Military Science and Tactics (DMST). Angry DMST officials confronted and threatened Chua, and in March, the young student was kidnapped and murdered. His corpse was found floating in the Pasig River, his hands bound, his face gagged with packaging tape.

Everyone knows how corrupt the ROTC has become. The University Belt Consortium statement refers to "collection of unauthorized fees, bribery and extortion" and abuses that are "rampant and persistent." The joint statement points out that since the ROTC is "the male student's first brush with the military, the irregularities and abuses he sees or experiences...become his first—and lasting—impression of the military: corrupt, abusive and hiding behind the veneer of the nation's defense system to prey on defenseless civilians."

I'm surprised that the consortium's strong statement has produced only weak responses from the other schools, and from the public. Why aren't parents and students supporting the university consortium's position on the abolition of the ROTC?

I suspect that deep down, people still think that the ROTC might have some value for the country's defense or maybe, as one parent told me, to instill discipline in our male teenagers. It's time we disabuse ourselves of such notions. The ROTC, as it exists today, is completely useless. We're in a state of war right now with several insurgencies and with the Abu Sayyaf, and the ROTC has not made us any more effective in dealing with these problems. Who has to fight these wars? The military and the police, the Cafgus. When all's said and done, the ones who bear the heaviest burdens in terms of defense are still the civilians, most of whom never had the ROTC for the simple reason that they never even got to college.

As for the matter of discipline, there are many more effective ways to do this than marching drills. Community service, for example, although I should also add quickly that I'm always uncomfortable about any kind of "compulsory service," those last two words sounding almost like an oxymoron.

I'd go further and ask why we need to think of a replacement for the ROTC. Why can't Saturday mornings be left free for other activities at home or in school? Speaking as a university teacher, I think it's terrible that we can't schedule weekend fieldtrips for freshmen and sophomore classes because the males have to do the ROTC.

If the ROTC is to be retained then it should be made optional, and only after instituting extensive reforms. Purge the ROTC of its corrupt officials (and hope you still have a few left after the clean-up operation). Reform the curriculum and bring in the S and T (science and tactics) to make the DMSTs worth their name. If the Department of National Defense really believes the ROTC complements its work, then it should pour in more resources rather than use university space, time and money. The ROTC might even become more effective if you make it optional—you'll then get a smaller corps of men and women who do want military training.

At this point though, I think there's very little to argue for the retention of the ROTC. It's not only useless but also wastes so much money and time. For financially strapped families, the ROTC means added expenses for uniforms and props. For the students and their families, the ROTC means lost weekends, and more. The other day I was asking around about the senior students I had brought out for fieldwork over the last few years. I was saddened to find out that at least five never graduated. They had finished all their academic requirements, except the ROTC. These are not undisciplined bums—they were bright students, so bright they couldn't stomach the idea of wasting their time with the ROTC.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org

LETTERS

Stuck in poverty

ONE does not have to be an economic expert to know that one of the reasons our economy cannot seem to progress at a satisfactory level is the fact that there is too much politicking in our impoverished land.

This pathetic situation is a direct result of too frequent elections. To illustrate: just over a month ago, we just had a not so orderly election for local officials and 13 senators, then next year, we will have the barangay elections (which is supposed to be non-partisan but the reverse is true), and two years after that, we will have the presidential elections. As things stand now, hardly has an elected official warmed his seat and his mind and actions are already focused on the next elections or to be more precise, how to get reelected. This situation is definitely not conducive to good and effective governance, a requisite for a robust economic development.

Then after the issue of too much politicking, we still have to grapple with other problems like graft and corruption, the peace and order problem, bureaucratic red tape, a very fat bureaucracy, high population growth, high unemployment rate, poor implementation of laws passed by Congress, tax evasion, low wages relative to high costs of basic commodities, labor contractualization, high costs of medicines, high cost of electricity, lack of schoolrooms, lack of teachers, lack of textbooks, lack of hospitals, lack of doctors, high tuition fees, high transportation costs, chaotic traffic problem in Metro Manila and key cities, endless "coup" in the Senate, etc. *ad infinitum, atbp.*

With these multifarious problems facing us, I can only say: God help our country and people.—**PAUL R. MORTEL, MBLA Court, Malanday, Marikina City**

'SS' about the SSS and 'communists'

NEXT to his mother-in-law, I am probably Honesto C. General's worst nightmare, judging from his hysterical column last June 18 ("Teodoro Casiño: Portrait of a communist").

General, who from his picture would be old enough to have taken part in the anti-communist witch-hunts of the 1950s, called me an "old-time communist" for opposing the privatization of the Social Security System (SSS). I originally planned to answer him point by point, were it not for Neal Cruz's excellent column the following day which adequately dealt with the SSS privatization issue. *Mag-ingat ka,* Mr. Cruz, you might be accused of being a communist.

Just a point though about General's assertion that high interest loans would benefit the SSS members since it's their money that's being lent out. Unfortunately, it's also the members who borrow money from the SSS. And so they will find themselves paying more for borrowing their own money—a classic case of *ginigisa sa sariling mantika.*

General faulted me for wanting the poor to subsidize the poor. Well, that's better than having the poor subsidize the rich, particularly the parasitic fund managers, speculators and insurance agents like him.

General said that the SSS is a capitalist invention. What bull. The law governing social security was passed in 1954 and the SSS was established three years later due to the insistent demands of the labor unions, foremost among them the Congress of Labor Organizations headed by Amado Hernandez, himself a suspected officer of the original Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas. The concept of social security itself was a socialist idea which was grudgingly adopted by capitalist bosses to appease their exploited and oppressed workers.

Finally, General labeled me a communist for opposing the dictates of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Like all communists out there, he says, I hate privatization, liberalization, deregulation, big business and private profits. My, if that's how communists think, I might as well sign up for the party, along with members of the AFL-CIO (the biggest and most conservative US labor federation), the French farmers and just about every civil society group in the world that has come out strongly against the IMF-WB's disastrous economic policies.

General made a lot of fuss about my being unemployed, ineligible for SSS membership and living off my parents' and friends' backs (*buti na lang* he said I am good-looking). Unable to explain how we activists manage to exist like so many of our countrymen—without regular jobs and always hungry, he concluded that I must be getting a share of Ka Roger's tax collections.

We columnists (I write a column, too, in another paper) have a term for this kind of writing: "SS." We get a few quotes from a press release, add our own crap to it, and pass it on as intelligent opinion-writing. Unfortunately, General did it at my expense, and so I have to respond.—**TEODORO A. CASIÑO, secretary general, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, 23 Maamo St., Sikatuna Village, Quezon City**

De Venecia's role in Edsa II

HARSH words have been unjustly thrown at former Speaker Jose de Venecia by those who claim to have been the driving force behind Edsa II. They have labeled him a "*trapo,*" criticized his style and conveniently ignored his significant achievements when he was speaker of the House. I am writing this to correct this terrible injustice.

Those close to the former speaker have spoken about his role as a quintessential political leader and diplomat when the Estrada administration was still in power.

First, the Exclamation Point Movement was conceived in De Venecia's Dasmariñas home a year before Edsa II. This was the first organized opposition movement against massive corruption in the Estrada administration.

Second, when the impeachment of Estrada was stalled in the House, Rep. Hernani Braganza sought De Venecia's help. De Venecia, who was then in Argentina delivering a speech before the Christian Democrats of Europe and Latin America, flew to Manila within 72 hours. He then started working on a number of key congressmen, starting with the core group of then Speaker Manuel Villar, an Erap supporter at that time.

De Venecia convinced most of Villar's key leaders—Representatives Dante Liban, Jun Punzalan and Jun Verceles—to support the impeachment motion. Then he talked to Cynthia Villar, Manny's better half. At a meeting in Rep. Emily Lopez's residence, he made a convincing case for impeachment. "Manny won't have a chance in the senatorial elections if he stayed with Erap," he told the speaker's wife. Within a few days, Villar sent the impeachment charge to the Senate.

Third, De Venecia turned down an offer to head Estrada's Economic Planning Council.

Fourth, he headed a management committee created by the opposition during the Estrada administration composed of Nani Perez, Joe Almonte, Tony Carpio, Buboy Macapagal and Renato Corona. The committee tried to anticipate Erap's moves and plotted countermoves to protect the country during the impeachment trial. Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo occasionally attended its meetings.

Fifth, De Venecia was instrumental in convincing PMA Class '70 through Director Hermogenes Ebdane to neutralize the Erap-leaning PMA Class '70 led by Sen. Gregorio Honasan and PNP Director General Panfilo Lacson. De Venecia's role was later acknowledged by President Macapagal.

Sixth, De Venecia mobilized international support for Ms Macapagal as Erap's constitutional successor. Notable among them was the CDI, headed by former Prime Minister Wilfried Martens of Belgium, with its 100 political parties in Europe and around the world.

Seventh, Washington specialist Prof. W. Scott Thompson, at the request of De Venecia and Almonte, reached US Secretary of State Colin Powell and US National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice to warn adventurers in Manila against creating a military-civilian junta.

Certainly, these events helped make Edsa II the successful revolt it turned out to be.—**MARIETTA PRIMICIAS-GOCO, 5 10th Street, New Manila, Quezon City**

Racist attack on Americans

THIS refers to "American Ugly" by Leandro V. Coronel.

I was born, raised, educated and worked in Manila until age 55 when I emigrated to the United States with my wife and son. We're now US citizens and proud of it, as are, I'm sure, millions of Filipinos who are now US citizens.

On settling in the new country, I was acutely sensitive to the race issue since I belonged to a minority. I learned that a racist is one who discriminates against and hates those of other races. To cite some examples: A Klu Klux Klanner hates all blacks. A white supremacist hates all non-Anglo-Saxon whites. A Neo-Nazi hates all Jews.

I learned that one is not a racist when, in criticizing others in the exercise of free speech, one says, "This specifically identified African-American is a criminal but the vast majority of African-Americans are law-abiding," or "This specifically identified Anglo-Saxon white is promiscuous but the vast majority of Anglo-Saxon whites are decent," or, if you will, "This specifically identified Filipino is unscrupulous but the vast majority of Filipinos are honest."

As an American citizen of Filipino ethnicity, I am offended by Coronel's irresponsible article for its total lack of fairness. Had he confined his diatribe to the anecdotal incident involving Jim Weir, and to bashing George W. Bush, I'd have considered it fair play. But "American Ugly" was racist. It's on that account that I raise my voice in vigorous protest. Racist in that it branded **all** Americans without exception, from George W. Bush to Jim Weir to every last one who possesses a US birth certificate or passport as "whiners...spoiled brats...insufferable braggarts...loud, insolent, boorish...visiting potentates abroad [who] own the world...[who think they are] the center of the world and undisputed leader of global politics and the global economy...[who] expect people to follow their orders, cater to their desires, bow to their wishes, kowtow to their whims...[who] like to punctuate their conversations with [expletives] and similar oral ejaculations..." With one broad brush, the writer labels all Americans as unfit humans.

Never mind that all races have their share of good and bad. From Coronel's angle of view, all Americans—sans a single exception—are low-lifes.

Strangely, Filipinos were not spared the venom of his racism: "The irony of the United States is that it is considered as heaven by the anxious would-be immigrants that line up every day in front of the US embassies all over the world." To add insult to injury, Coronel writes patronizingly of those who, if truth be told, need to extricate themselves from grinding poverty by seeking opportunities abroad: "That's because there's opportunity to make money there, if that's one's ambition." I'm sure most Americans do not look down their noses at the less fortunate as Coronel does.

The editorial note accompanying the piece was intriguing. It said that Coronel "lived in Washington, D.C. from 1969 to 1997." How, in the name of all that's decent, did he survive living almost 30 years among all those despicable Americans he mercilessly libeled in his piece, including Filipino-American *kababayans*?

"American Ugly"? Yes, there are those. But unlike Coronel, the vast majority are fair in their criticism of other races.—**MANUEL M. ROXAS JR., 146 Sonoma Valley Street, Las Vegas, Nevada 89144**

Another person's heart-warming experience

I WISH to rectify an error regarding a letter about President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's son, dated June 6, 2001.

Actually, the story did not happen to me. And I did not send it either.

The story was written by Teresa Dumana who sent it to e-lagda. This story was forwarded to my son here in the United States by a friend from the Ateneo. In turn, my son forwarded it to other members of our family around the United States.

It was a happy bit of news for us and it gave us optimism about our dear Philippines. With good intentions, my husband Raul forwarded the story to the INQUIRER.

Now this is where the error came in. To make the story short, the INQUIRER cut off the upper part of the letter which explained where it came from. By removing this vital bit of information, the letter came out written in the first person.

To add to the confusion, my husband Raul used my e-mail address so the letter came out with my name, Dette Pascual.

In fairness to Teresa Dumana who wrote that first-person story, and to set the record straight, please publish this letter so we can give credit where credit is due.—**DETTE PASCUAL, dpascual@juno.com**

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Court stops Zambales demolition

BY ROCKY NAZARENO,
TONETTE OREJAS
AND CESAR VILLA
PDI Central Luzon Bureau

A ZAMBALES regional trial court has issued a 20-day restraining order against Jessmag Inc., a property company belonging to the family of Zambales Gov. Vicente Magsaysay, to stop demolishing structures and barricading a coastal barangay in Iba, Zambales.

Judge-designate Lilia O. Español issued the order last Tuesday, acting on a petition filed by residents and beach resort owners of Barangay Lipay Dingin, a piece of beachfront property which the Magsaysays claim to own.

Español directed Jessmag Inc. "to desist from committing acts of harassment, intimidation and threat against the petitioners."

They were also directed to stop destroying the fences and other properties in the area.

In her two-page order, Español likewise ordered Jessmag Inc., which has barricaded the area since June 12 "to allow free access to the houses and premises and remove whatever barricades that were installed... that obstruct free movement."

The residents and resort owners, through their lawyer Jesus G.J. Fortez, alleged that Jessmag Inc. illegally raided and took over their properties on June 12.

They also charged that Jessmag Inc. virtually "hamletted" the area when it put up barricades and fenced off the barangay with barbed wire.

They related how a "group of armed men entered the community, harassed, intimidated and threatened (residents and resort owners)... and "with the use of heavy equipment, (Jessmag Inc.) destroyed fences and other properties."

Reacting to the court order, Jessmag counsel Estansilao Cesa Jr. said: "What? There's no more to restrain anyway. All the structures have been demolished, right?"

Meanwhile, a source at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources office here said the family of Governor Magsaysay did obtain titles to the disputed property, but the Supreme Court had rendered the original certificate of title as well as other titles derived from it null and void.

However, a civil case to cancel the titles has yet to be resolved, making the Magsaysay titles "still in effect," the DENR source said.

The high court had ordered the Solicitor General to file a case seeking the cancellation of the original and transfer titles before the regional trial court in Iba.

The case, known as Civil Case 666-I, has been pending for almost a decade.

The judge handling the case has died and has not been replaced, the INQUIRER learned.

"The Magsaysays cannot be accused of land-grabbing because they do have titles to the property," the source said.

Among the titles voided by the Supreme Court was the transfer certificates of title held by the Magsaysays for a 20-hectare land in Barangay Lipay-Dingin-Panibuatan in Iba.

The Magsaysays, through their father Jesus, acquired the land from Epifanio Romanban and Santiago Parong, holder of the OCT to Lot 42-E, according to a DENR official in Zambales.

The Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals, in 1989, reverted Lot 42-E to the public domain, court records showed.

Magsaysay said his family would face the claimants of their land in court, if only to protect the family's ownership rights.

He also assailed the DENR for "not doing its homework regarding land dispatches in the province."

Magsaysay reiterated that his family only wanted to assert ownership over lands they have not occupied for many years.

Five lot titles covering 20.69 hectares in the disputed area were issued in 1971 to the Magsaysay family by the Register of Deeds and approved by then registry provincial officer Federico Nacin.

"We should only protect the product of our father's toil," said Cesar Magsaysay, brother of the governor.

"The case of land ownership is just a matter of which party is telling the truth. If the other claimants can show authentic ownership, we readily welcome them," the governor said.

But he said no one has come forward to show proof, but instead "they came to sign waivers, which worked on our favor."

Fortez, the counsel for the expelled residents, said the court restraining order, was a recognition of the legal rights of those who were left homeless during the June 12 demolition and of those whose houses are threatened with demolition.

US needs access in Asia, says general

WASHINGTON—The United States will need access to larger bases in southeast Asia to project military power across the region if US strategy shifts to the Asia-Pacific region, a top air force general said Tuesday.

General Charles Robertson, commander in chief of the US Mobility Command, said high velocity transport planes and bases that can handle them are key to overcoming "the tyranny of distance" in the Asia Pacific region.

"Infrastructure is the thing I worry about the most when you get past just having enough airplanes to move through the system," said Robertson, whose command coordinates the movement of ships and planes that supply US forces worldwide.

Six bases in the region—the same as in the smaller European theater—now handle the C-17 and mammoth C-5 transport planes that are used to move equipment and forces into the region at times of crisis.

Those bases are oriented to northeast Asia, where US forces are positioned for a potential conflict on the Korean peninsula. They are Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska, Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, Anderson Air Force Base in Guam, Yokota Air Base in Japan, Kadena Air Base in Okinawa and Osan Air Base in South Korea.

But the potential for conflict over Taiwan, separatist turmoil in Indonesia, and the nuclear rivalry between India and Pakistan have prompted calls for a southward tilt in the US Asia-Pacific strategy.

"Right now we have a very, very small toehold in Australia, a very small toehold in New Zealand, a very small toehold in Singapore, in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, and we use Thailand quite a bit," Robertson told defense reporters.

"If our emphasis shifts south significantly and we can't take advantage of some of the old infrastructure that we used in Vietnam era, then the answer to that is, yeah, probably we'll need to at least expand those toeholds," he said.

"We operate out of Kadena, Guam and Hickam into the Indian Ocean through Singapore to Diego (Garcia) over to Qatar and UAE as our Indian Ocean run. But it is limited throughout, so we will have to look at that strategy change," he said.

During the Vietnam War, the United States relied heavily on bases in the Philippines to support its forces in southeast Asia, but Manila closed the bases in 1991. *AFP*

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MANIFESTO OF SUPPORT FOR JOE DE V.

We, the leaders of major people's organizations of civil society representing some 7 million members, extend our unconditional support for Congressman-elect Jose de Venecia's bid for the Speakership of the House of the Representatives.

Our movement, The ***Pambansang Kilusan para sa Batayang Sektor***, representing labor, urban poor, consumer groups, NGOs, cooperatives, people's organizations, peasants, fisherfolk, OFWs, women, youth & student groups, victims of calamities, elderly, veterans, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and legitimate party-list organizations believe in his proven abilities to skillfully steer the House of Representatives.

De Venecia showed his worth as Speaker of the 9th and 10th Congresses. Having worked with him, we have seen his dedication to his work, his commitment to the basic sectors, and his successful role as a peacemaker. We agree with President Ramos that no Congress and no Speaker have done more than during his term.

Indeed, the next Speaker should be someone who knows the inner workings of the legislative process and someone who has a vision, a doable blueprint for the economy and the country, good rapport with sectoral groups and ethic groupings, the dynamism and passion to make a difference for our people, and first and foremost, someone who will help President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo tackle the political and economic crisis and win the war against poverty.

De Venecia's ability in harnessing the talents of various groups and coalitions is critical to President Arroyo's desire to heal the nation. During de Venecia's watch as the fourth highest leader of the land, he declared at the opening of the House in 1992, that the first two tasks of President Ramos and the Rainbow Coalition were to destroy the image of the Philippines as the "Sick Man of Asia" and to lay the beginnings of the modest Philippine economic miracle.

It sounded too ambitious but these two seemingly impossible tasks were achieved.

For it was de Venecia, who:

1) pioneered in the Middle East and North Africa that led to the employment of millions of Filipino OCWs;

2) conceived and implemented the dollar-remittance program that has earned for the nation more than $60-billion since 1967, provided the safety nets for the country since the dark years of martial law, and killed the blackmarket;

3) authored the Build -Operate-Transfer (BOT) law that raised more than $26-billion for power plants, monorails and highways, at no cost to government, and was declared a model by other governments;

4) engineered the successful Clark-Subic-Camp John Hay-Fort Bonifacio Bases Conversion Law;

5) provided the breakthrough in the ceasefire with the RAM-YOU military rebels and the peace pact with the MNLF;

6) led in the rebuilding of Dagupan City within two years after its destruction by the 1990 earthquake;

7) Put up, with his wife Gina and the Congressional Spouses Foundation, the Haven, the first semi-hospital in Southeast Asia for abused women and children, which has now treated more than 4,000 women-victims of rape & abuse and built 15 more such centers in all the regions of the Philippines.

We have become a nation under perpetual scrutiny by a world puzzled by our inexplicable attraction to crisis after crisis. We need a leader who can help the embattled administration rise to the challenges of terrorism, economic inequity, moral pollution and a creeping social injustice that could lead to further political unrest.

This not the time for trial and error. We need a seasoned hand, a consensus-builder, a successful peace-maker, and above all, one without a selfish agenda because he has no more higher political ambition.

Some sectors of society perceive him as a traditional politician. But as far as our part of civil society is concerned, if being traditional means enacting the following sixty (60) Social Reforms Laws that benefited most of our sectoral groups, then we believe he is one.

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS:		NO. OF LAWS APPROVED:
a. Cross-Sectoral Reform for all Basic Sectors		3
b. Agricultural Development for the Farmers & Landless Rural Workers		10
c. Fisheries & Aquatic Resources Management Conservation & Development for the Fisherfolk		1
d. Recognition & Protection of Ancestral Domains for the Indigenous Peoples		1
e. Socialized Housing for the Urban Poor		4
f. Workers' Welfare Protection		11
g. Comprehensive & Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS)		20
CIDSS - Women	6	
CIDSS- Children	7	
CIDSS- Youth & Students	4	
CIDSS- Senior Citizens	1	
CIDSS- Persons with Disabilities	0	
CIDSS-Victims of Disasters	2	
h. Provision of Health Services for all Basic Sectors		5
i. Livelihood & Credit for all Basic Sectors		1
j. Institution Building & Effective Participation in Local Governance		4
TOTAL		60

Manong Joe de Venecia can best promote the interests of our sectors and the interests of the nation. This country needs a leader courageous in his vision, tested in crisis, and able, most of all, to deliver the economic, anti-poverty, mass employment and other reform laws that can move the country forward again.

The ***Pambansang Kilusan para sa Batayang Sector*** commits itself to working with Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Congressman-elect de Venecia. We have seen him work. We have experienced his commitment to our sectoral agenda and are gratified with the substantial results of his leadership. In pursuit of our common goal -- we hold him to his word of being the Speaker for the Basic Sectors. Together, we will walk with them -- towards a life of dignity and abundance for all Filipinos.

MARIETTA P. GOCO
Punla sa Tao Fndn.
RP Dev. Fndn.

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Nat'l. Pres., FEJODAP

BERT ZINGAPAN
Pres., Party List ANGKOP

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The WORLD

Missile test successful

TAIPEI—Taiwan's Army said it successfully test-fired US Patriot missiles yesterday, knocking targets out of the sky in a live demonstration of the island's best defense against a rocket attack from China.

The official Central News Agency said three missiles were launched, downing two targets over the island's southeast coast. The report, citing an unidentified military source, did not make clear what the third missile had done.

The Army issued a brief statement saying the Patriot missiles had all hit their targets in "one of the major drills to test our air defense capability," but it did not specify how many missiles were fired or how many targets were hit.

Earlier, cable television showed one missile arching through the sky, trailed by exhaust smoke as Taiwan tested weaponry intended to deter one of China's biggest military threats—the many missiles Beijing has aimed at the island.

The missiles were fired from Chiu-Peng base in southern Pingtung County under the direction of a missile battalion that received congratulations on the "good news" in a phone call from President Chen Shui-bian, the Army said.

Two of the Patriot missiles knocked down flying targets, a dummy missile and a dummy aircraft, the Central News Agency reported.

Eastern cable TV said one of the Patriots, launched from the Pingtung army base, hit a missile fired from a mountain in neighboring Taitung County.

The defense ministry has declined to take questions from reporters. But a ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that based on the cable TV footage, which showed the flying missile, "it appeared to be a perfect launch."

Taiwan has purchased from the United States 200 Patriot missiles, an improved version of the weapons that gained notoriety for missing their targets in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The Patriots are defensive missiles intended to intercept incoming targets.

They have been deployed around Taipei, the capital, and yesterday's tests were the first time the missiles had been fired on Taiwanese soil.

The Patriot tests are occurring at the same time rival China is conducting massive war games, but Taiwan says the timing is coincidental and it is not trying to provoke Beijing.

Washington does not have formal ties with Taiwan but it has repeatedly said it is committed to selling the island weapons needed for its defenses.

Although Taiwan and China have been governed separately for more than half a century, Beijing considers Taiwan to be a breakaway province that must be reunited with the mainland, by force if necessary.

Taiwan has sought to build up its missile defense, arguing that China may have as many as 800 missiles pointed at the island within the next decade. *AP*

Prosecutors plan civil suits against Suharto

JAKARTA—Having failed to prosecute Indonesia's former dictator Suharto on criminal charges, state prosecutors now plan to file a civil lawsuit against him, news reports said yesterday.

Attorney General Baharudin Lopa—who was appointed three weeks ago and is known for his tough stance against graft—said the case would focus on the misuse of funds belonging to several charitable foundations Suharto controlled.

Lopa did not say when the lawsuit would be filed or what damages would be sought against Suharto, The Jakarta Post newspaper reported.

Last year, judges dismissed a $600-million criminal corruption case against the former president—whose 32-year regime ended in 1998—after doctors testified that a series of strokes had left him brain damaged and unable to stand trial.

The indictment against Suharto alleged that he had enriched himself, his family and cronies with state money through a complex web of tax-free charitable institutions under his control.

Prosecutors had hoped Suharto's health would improve to allow them to prosecute him. *AP*

Military ruler takes over as president

ISLAMABAD—Military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf will take the oath for the office of president Wednesday and formally dissolve Pakistan's suspended lower house of Parliament, officials said.

Musharraf, who seized power in a bloodless military coup in October 1999, will take over as Pakistan's president under a provisional constitutional order.

President Rafiq Tarrar will cease to hold his post, a senior foreign ministry official said on condition of anonymity. A military spokesperson also confirmed the move.

The National Assembly and the four provincial assemblies, which were suspended after the military coup, will be dissolved, though the Senate is likely to remain intact, the foreign ministry official said, providing no further details.

Musharraf has spoken of the need to ensure continuity of reform even after promised elections in 2002. There had been speculation that he might seek to become president and hold on to the post after the elections.

The move is apparently part of the military's plan to strengthen the office of the president and pave the way for a new political system that would be run by civilians but supervised by the Army.

Elections are expected to be held only after amendments to the Constitution aimed at providing a dominant role to the Army.

Musharraf, who declared himself Chief Executive of the country after ousting the former elected government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, will continue to hold the powerful slot of Army Chief of Staff.

The Supreme Court has given Musharraf powers to amend the Constitution and ordered him to return the country to democracy before October 2002.

The assemblies' dissolution removes many of the remaining vestiges of the former civilian government. The dissolved assemblies had elected the current president who will now step down.

Musharraf is the fourth military ruler to assume the power of president. Pakistan has been ruled by the military for 26 of its 53 years of independence.

The presidency has been largely ceremonial in recent years, though that is likely to change with Musharraf holding it. Before, the prime minister held real power. *AP*

Ruling party wants answers from Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR—When Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad opens the annual get-together of his United Malays National Organization on Thursday, he will be just three weeks shy of his 20th anniversary as Malaysia's leader.

While the general assembly will include an honor guard, set-piece pomp and the customary ovation for Mahathir's opening speech, it is also a key pointer to the state of a party unsettled by internal strife and on the defensive from external challenges.

The three-day meeting of Umno comes amid an economic downturn and persistent allegations of corruption and cronyism which have helped split its traditional voter base. The government also faces antagonism about limiting press freedoms and criticism for its harsh treatment of opposition leaders.

Against this backdrop hangs the biggest question in Malaysian politics: when and how will Mahathir, 75, end his reign? The issue has new currency since the resignation early this month of the powerful finance minister, Daim Zainuddin, which has still not been fully explained.

Few people believe the meeting will produce fiery exchanges or demands that Mahathir step down.

But analysts say there is a groundswell of opinion among Umno's 2.7 million members that it is time for Mahathir to settle the question of his successor, an open question since heir-apparent Anwar Ibrahim was fired as deputy premier and jailed in 1998 amid an abortive power play.

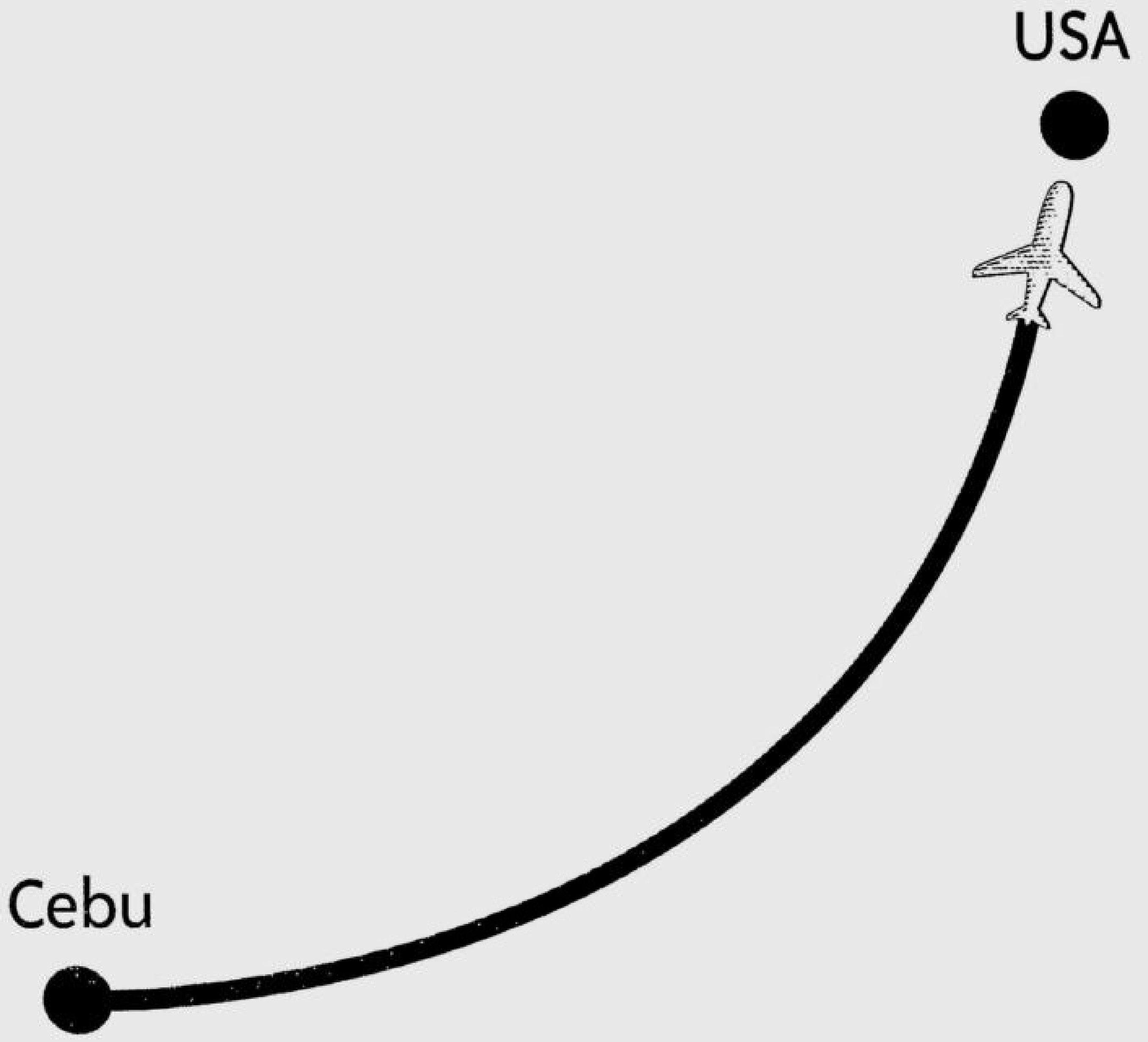
"The delegates are not brave enough to make an outright demand for Mahathir to quit," said Mohamad Agus Yusoff, a political science lecturer at the National University of Malaysia. "And Mahathir himself is too obsessed with power to quit."

But Umno delegates will demand some "frank answers" from Mahathir about his plans to revitalize the party, which has dominated Malaysian politics since independence from Britain in 1957 but as lost some of its luster in the twilight of Mahathir's rule, Agus said.

They will want to know, for example, what happened with Daim, who won't be attending the conference.

For years one of Mahathir's closest allies, Daim resigned on June 1 without giving reasons. It followed criticism about a series of government bailouts of companies run by Daim associates. Mahathir took the portfolio himself.

Daim's departure has triggered an intense guessing game about Mahathir's long-term plans and jostling among potential successors. *AP*



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Rise to The Challenge and Share your Learnings!

Greetings to the Association of Semiconductor and Electronics Manufacturing Engineers of the Philippines.

We live in the Society where knowledge and creatvity are the barometers of progress. It is this challenging environment that our youth will enter into. This is why we at the Department of Education, Culture and Sports envision graduates of the school system who are heroes in their own right; able in skills and values to contribute meaningfully and honorably to society. "Bawat Graduate - Bayani at Marangal na Filipino" is the vision we strive for.

One of the skills of our students must master is the application of technical skills into productive endeavors. The linkage between the school and industry must be strengthened so that we can produce graduates who can help power the needs of the workplace.

In this age where knowledge and not the traditional sources of wealth is the engine for growth, industry leaders, the teachers, students and all educators must pull their intellectual efforts to ensure that knowledge is generated and shared. Mabuhay!

Raul S. Roco
RAUL S. ROCO
Secretary
Department of Education Culture & Sports (DECS)

Analog Devices Incorporated takes pride in having been selected as the host for the 11th ASEMEP National Technical Symposium. I am enthused by the sustained interest of our engineers and companies in sharing some of their technical accomplishments and discoveries. Technology, as we all know remains to be the major driver in economic development and this symposium directly supports the initiatives of keeping our assembly and test technical expertise in the Philippines at par if not ahead with the other countries.

We will be able to sustain the presence of several semiconductor companies in the Philippines and in fact invite future locators if we continue to produce highly skilled engineers and technicians. Strong industry-academe linkage and relevant technical school curriculum are some of the prerequisites in attaining this objective. This symposium aims to encourage sharing of our experiences among the engineers and with our technical learning institutions as well.

My special appreciation to the delegates, the paper authors and the sponsors who are the engine that keeps this symposium going.

More power to the ASEMEP and the semiconductor industry in the Philippines!

EDMUNDO G. FORTUNADO
Managing Director
Analog Devices, Inc.
Philippine Operations

About the Symposium

The ***11th ASEMEP National Technical Symposium*** is an annual event being organized by the Association of Semiconductor & Electronics Manufacturing Engineers of the Philippines. This year's theme "Challenges and Breakthroughs towards Manufacturing Excellence in the 21st Century" calls for a concerted effort of our technical community to maintain the country's leadership in the electronics industry, amidst competition for our ASEAN neighbors. We enjoin engineers and professionals to rise to the challenge and share their learnings through active participation in the Technical and Learning Sessions of the Symposium.

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ASEMEP Symposium 2001

Theme: Challenges and Breakthroughs Towards Manufacturing Excellence in the 21st Century

JUNE 21 & 22, 2001
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OPENING CEREMONIES - 21 JUNE 2001

VENUE: PICC RECEPTION HALL

07:00 AM	REGISTRATION	
09:00 AM	NATIONAL ANTHEM	*Southeast Assn. for the Deaf Sign Choir (SAID)*
09:05 AM	INVOCATION	*SAID*
09:10 AM	WELCOME REMARKS	*Ed Fortunado*
09:30 AM	THEME PRESENTATION PRESENTATION OF SPONSORS PRODUCTION NUMBER	
09:40 AM	INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE SPEAKER	*Emil Armas, ADI*
09:45 AM	KEYNOTE SPEAKER	*Hon. Sec. Raul S. Roco*
10:15 AM	INTRODUCTION OF PLENARY SPEAKER	*Lito Mena, ADI*
10:20 AM	PLENARY ADDRESS - OPTICAL MEMS	*Tim Spooner, ADI*
10:50 AM	INDUCTION OF ASEMEP OFFICERS	*Bong Belen* *Vio Aguinaldo*
11:00 AM	INTERMISSION	
11:10 AM	FORMAL EXHIBIT LAUNCHING	*Hon. Sec. Raul S. Roco* TO BE ASSISTED BY *Ed Fortunado* *Bong Belen,* *Vio Aguinaldo*
11:20 AM	AWARDING OF PLAQUES TO PRINCIPAL SONSORS	*Ed Fortunado ,* *Bong Belen,* *Vio Aguinaldo*
12:00 AM	LUNCH - RECEPTION HALL,	

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I would like to send my Congratulations to the members of the Association of Semiconductor and Electronics Manufacturing Engineers of the Philippines (ASEMEP) on your 11th National Technical Symposium.

The theme for this year's symposium, "Challenges and Breakthroughs towards Manufacturing Excellence," is timely and relevant. In this age when global competitiveness has become the key imperative for industries and businesses, merely responding to the present challenges in manufacturing is not enough. The Philippines electronics industry in general, and SEIPI in particular, must do our best to be at least one step ahead of our global competitors.

I commend the ASEMEP for its untiring efforts to further develop our Engineers and bring our manufacturing processes to the next level, SEIPI gives you its full support in all your endeavors.

SATURNINO G. BELEN
President
Semiconductors & Electronics Industries of the Philippines, Inc. (SEIPI)

The ASEMEP started very small but has a big dream. Today, our vision is no less big: we must continue to create "ENABLED" engineers in the semiconductors and electronics industry. The holding of the 11th ASEMEP National Technical Symposium again paves the way to encourage and hasten breakthrough and innovative ideas as well as to promote the networking among our engineers and participants.

The theme of the 2001 Symposium hosted by Analog Devices, Philippines "Challenges & Breakthroughs towards Manufacturing Excellence in the 21st Century" clearly manifests the enduring commitment to help build up the technical competence and leadership of the engineers in our Industry.

I would like to congratulate the authors and presentors who willingly shared the results of their experiments, studies and achievements without whom this Symposium would not have been possible.

I wish to thank our Host and Organizer- Analog Devices Philippines for graciously accepting the challenge of hosting this year's event and ensuring the high quality of the technical presentations, wider participation and achieving another milestone in the history of ASEMEP.

My special thanks also goes to the Sponsors who have been very supportive to the ideals of ASEMEP and to the men and women of the technical committee as well as the moderators who contributed their fair share of time, mind and heart in the success of the 11th National Technical Symposium.

I wish you all for a fruitful Symposium and the continued success of ASEMEP.

VIO S. AGUINALDO
ASEMEP Chairman
Philips Semiconductor Phils., Inc

Areas of Interests

❖ Assembly Technology	: Processes, Materials, Advanced Packaging , Lead Free Initiatives
❖ Test Technology	: New Test Processes, Methodologies, Innovations, Test and Measurements, ESD
❖ Manufacturing Technology	: Yield Improvement, Cycle Time, Productivity Improvement, Equipment Utilization, Process Simplification, Cost Re-engineering and Improvements,
❖ Quality Systems and Reliability	: Failure Analysis, Accelerated Testing, TQM, TPM, FMEA, SPC, Environmental Systems
❖ Electronics Assemblies	: PCB/Substrate Technologies, Soldering Techniques, New Process Technologies, Hybrids , Lead Free Alternatives
❖ Mass Storage Technology	: Hard Disk Drive, CD ROMS, Flash Cards, Optical Disk Drives, Floppy Disks
❖ Information Technology	: Computer Integrated Manufacturing, Computerized Machine Management Systems, Networking, Shop Floor Control, Planning / Scheduling Systems

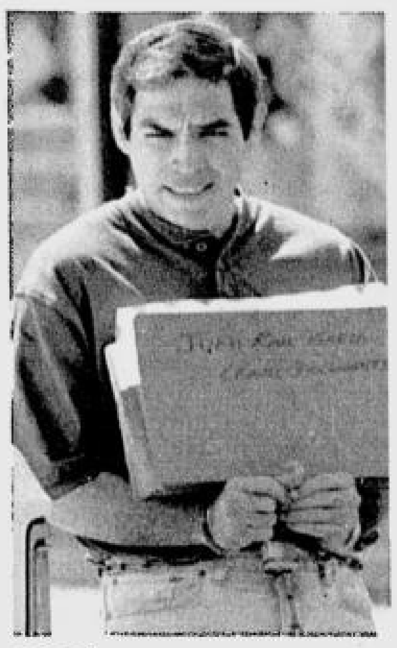
Symposium 2001 Highlights

❖ TECHNICAL SESSION
Fifty-four (54) technical papers focusing on each area of interest will be presented during the Symposium. Each technical paper provides solutions to actual problems or situation being encountered by companies and outlining the benefits gained from the implementation of the solutions. Successful adaptation of foreign or new technologies will be discussed.

❖ LEARNING SESSION
Six (6) lectures dealing with new or emerging technologies, systems and processes will be discussed during the Learning Session. The topics to be discussed will offer new and cost-effective solutions to companies. Likewise, this enable the participants to broaden their perspectives as they adapt appropriate technologies towards improving quality and productivity

❖ EXHIBITION OF PRODUCTS & SERVICES
A wide range of products and services will be displayed by more than 40 companies during the Symposium. During the exhibits, the delegates will have the chance to have face-to-face discussion with current and prospective suppliers as they explore alternative to further improve quality and productivity

'I'm sorry for the pain, grief'


GARZA

TERRE HAUTE, Indiana—With an apology for "the pain and grief that I have caused," murderer and drug kingpin Juan Raul Garza was executed Tuesday, eight days after Timothy McVeigh became the first federal inmate put to death since 1963.

Garza died by chemical injection, strapped to the same gurney where Oklahoma City bomber McVeigh was executed last week.

He nervously flexed his feet as Warden Harley Lappin tied the curtains back on the witness rooms. As the chemicals entered his veins, he kept his head cocked to the left, toward the room assigned to his own witnesses. His eyes slowly closed half way and his lips turned a light blue.

He went to his death calmly and, unlike McVeigh, with remorse. "I just want to say that I'm sorry, and I apologize for all the pain and grief that I have caused," he said. "I ask your forgiveness and God bless."

As Garza was being executed, about 50 anti-death penalty activists outside the US Penitentiary sang "We Shall Overcome" and other protest songs.

The scene was in stark contrast to the buzz of media activity during McVeigh's final days. Dan Dunne, a US Bureau of Prisons spokesperson, said only about 75 reporters had registered for credentials to cover Garza's death. More than 1,000 reporters had credentials for the McVeigh execution.

Garza, 44, was convicted of murdering a man by shooting him five times in the head and neck and of ordering the deaths of two other men. It was all part of Garza's marijuana smuggling operation, which federal prosecutors say he ran ruthlessly.

He was the first person to be executed under the 1988 federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which imposes a death sentence for murders stemming from a drug enterprise.

While Garza and McVeigh were the first two federal inmates executed in 38 years, state authorities have put to death 719 inmates since the US Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976.

It could be months or even years before there is another execution at the Terre Haute prison, home of the only federal death row. No execution dates have been set for any of the 18 other men held there under death sentences.

Despite lingering questions about the racial and geographic equality of the federal death penalty, President George W. Bush and the U.S. Supreme Court refused Monday to delay Garza's execution. *AP*

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WORLDBRIEFS

Wahid slams military

JAKARTA—President Abdurrahman Wahid Tuesday accused the Indonesian Police and Army of widescale human rights abuses in the course of their duties. "There have been a huge amount of violations by people holding positions" in the security forces, said Wahid in an address to an international workshop on crimes against humanity. Wahid said both the Police and Army needed continual improvement. He did not elaborate. International and local rights groups accuse Indonesian security forces of ignoring human rights. Aid workers in the western province of Aceh, which has seen more than 25 years of separatist violence, regularly claim that troops torture and kill civilians. *AP*

No more nuke tests

WASHINGTON—Pakistani Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said Tuesday after a meeting with Secretary of State Colin Powell that his country would refrain from further nuclear testing so long as India shows similar restraint. Sattar met with Powell for 90 minutes, hoping to reverse the decline in Pakistani influence in Washington compared with the Cold War-era partnership between the two countries. US relations with Pakistan have been buffeted on a number of fronts, including the close ties Pakistan maintains with the Taliban militia in Afghanistan, which harbors terrorist suspect Osama bin Laden, who is wanted in the bombing of two US embassies in East Africa in 1998. *AP*

Bin Laden video

KUWAIT—Islamic militant Osama bin Laden's Afghanistan-based group boasts in a recruitment videotape that its followers bombed the USS Cole in Yemen's Aden harbor last year. The video, circulating among Muslim militants and viewed here Tuesday, would represent the clearest link yet between Bin Laden and the Oct. 12 attack that killed 17 American sailors and wounded 39. But Bin Laden himself does not specifically make that claim on the tape and has not accepted responsibility in the past. Yemeni officials have said they have no evidence personally linking Bin Laden, an exiled Saudi millionaire, to the bombing of the US Navy destroyer. But the US government considers him a prime suspect and has sought evidence to tie him to the suicide bombers who detonated an explosives-packed boat alongside the Cole. *AP*

AIDS pandemic

UNITED NATIONS—The first high-level UN meeting to tackle the global AIDS epidemic will bring representatives of 180 countries to New York next week, including 24 leaders—the vast majority from Africa, which has been hardest-hit by the killer disease. "It's indicative of the priority that African nations are attaching to the HIV/AIDS special session and to the combating of this pandemic," Bangladesh's UN Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, the current Security Council president, said Tuesday. "I wish that some more high-level leaders from other parts of the world would have come . . . particularly densely populated countries of Asia and Africa." Africa is home to two-thirds of the more than 36 million people now infected. But a UN chart released earlier this month showed the epidemic spreading through parts of Asia and Latin America as well, and no country is immune. *AP*

Virus vs cancer

WASHINGTON—In research that may offer new hope for treating an aggressive and lethal cancer, doctors say an injection of a common virus into the brains of mice caused tumors to shrink without causing other disease. Although the study was conducted in laboratory mice, Dr. Peter Forsyth of the Tom Baker Cancer Center in Calgary, Alberta, said the virus injection therapy may be ready for human clinical trials in about six months. Forsyth is senior author of a study appearing yesterday in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute. The researcher acknowledged he owns stock in a company that may conduct human clinical trials with the experimental cancer therapy. The study extends earlier work, said Forsyth, that proved the concept of treating cancer using what is called a reovirus. This is a virus that is common in the lungs and gut of humans, but which is thought to be harmless except to cancer cells. *AP*

Bias denied

LIMA, Peru—On the eve of his verdict, the presiding magistrate in the retrial of Lori Berenson denied accusations Tuesday his court was biased against the New York native, who is accused of conspiring with leftist rebels. Magistrate Marcos Ibazeta's three-judge panel is widely expected to find Berenson guilty of helping the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, or MRTA, in a thwarted plan to seize Peru's Congress. On several occasions during the three-month trial, Ibazeta openly accused Berenson of being involved with the rebels. She admits she rented a house in 1995 used by the MRTA as a hide-out, but denies she knew their real identities. "Here the presumption of innocence exists and rules, but the system of questioning, the procedural system, is distinct," Ibazeta said. *AP*

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ROUNDUP

Vice mayor stabbed dead

COTABATO CITY—The reelected vice mayor of Antipas town in North Cotabato was stabbed to death Tuesday night in front of the town's Catholic church. Vice Mayor Eduardo Lagania suffered three stab wounds in the chest. He died while being rushed to the hospital, according to Insp. Wilfredo Perocho, Antipas police chief. Policemen arrested a suspect, Germinio Jaime, but said they have not established the motive for the attack. Perocho said the suspect was last seen tailing Lagania on his way home. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

School budget needed

NAGA CITY—The Bicol Concerned Teachers Alliance (BCTA) in Camarines Sur has suggested a way out of the school fees problem: Ask the local school boards to provide budgets for public schools. Rey Tesorero, BCTA coordinator, said the Local Government Code mandates local school boards to support education but alleged that the boards spend the funds on concerns other than educational development. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Farmers get discount

PILI, Camarines Sur—The Department of Agriculture is offering certified seeds at half the price to farmers through its Rice Seed Program. Fe Laysa, DA Bicol executive director, said farmers would pay P325 instead of P650 for a bag of certified seeds. But farmers who have unpaid loans as of July 1 are disqualified. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Gunmen kill 1

KIBLAWAN, Davao del Sur—Suspected cattle rustlers fired at two houses in Barangay Cogon Bacaca in Kiblawan, Davao del Sur Monday dawn, killing Dionesia Medina and wounding Ermehilinda Nucos. The identity of the suspects and the motive for the shooting are still unknown. Police are still investigating the attack. *Jean Bansilan, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Fire razes 40 houses

COTABATO CITY—A fire of still unknown origin razed at least 40 houses in Barangay Bacolod, Parang, Maguindanao 1 a.m. Tuesday. Town fire marshall SFO3 Manuel Billones said the fire destroyed about P1.5 million worth of property. No one was reported hurt in the fire. At 8 p.m. the same day, another fire hit the town and destroyed a two-room building of the Parang Central Pilot Elementary School. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila Hi 32° Lo 25°	**Baguio** Hi 24° Lo 16°	**Tuguegarao** Hi 32° Lo 23°
Laoag Hi 32° Lo 25°	**Clark Zone** Hi 32° Lo 24°	**Tagaytay** Hi 30° Lo 21°
Legazpi Hi 31° Lo 26°	**Bacolod** Hi 31° Lo 24°	**Roxas** Hi 31° Lo 25°
Cebu Hi 30° Lo 25°	**Tacloban** Hi 32° Lo 25°	**Gen. Santos** Hi 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga Hi 31° Lo 24°	**Cagayan de Oro** Hi 31° Lo 22°	**Davao** Hi 29° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/06/21/01

PDI BUREAUS

Northern Luzon Bureau
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074) 443-9255
Fax No. (074) 443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com .ph

Southern Luzon Bureau
23 Aurora St.,Old Albay District
Legazpi City
Tel. No . (052) 820-8402
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com .ph

Visayas Bureau
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346 / 233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: pdivis@skyinet.net

Mindanao Bureau
FEP Printing Corp. Bldg.
Ma-ad Road, Davao City
Tel. Nos. (082) 244-1770 to 71

Sportsdome cost ₱57M more

DAVAO CITY—The P300-million Davao City Artica Sports Dome is overpriced by P57 million, according to a Commission on Audit team.

The COA team, led by state auditor Edwin Diez, was asked to review the sports dome project.

The team said the "excess cost or positive variance" in the project came from overestimated quantities of certain contract items and construction materials.

The overprice, the team said, may have also been caused by the purchase of items that were not used in the construction and the purchase of materials that were not needed for the project.

The COA team also found "lower-than-standard" production pieces of equipment, improper computation of equipment expenses and excessive use of construction materials.

The report, dated Nov. 9, 2000, was endorsed by the COA regional office to City Auditor Dina Novelero on Nov. 21. Novelero forwarded the report to Mayor Benjamin de Guzman on Nov. 27. It was received by City Administrator Nestor Ledesma on Dec. 1.

In her letter of endorsement, Novelero said the COA review was "only 79.50 percent (complete) due to deficiencies and limitations encountered (by the COA technical review team)."

Novelero requested the city mayor "that the needed documents/information be submitted soonest (sic) to facilitate completion of the review."

The "deficiencies and limitations" reportedly uncovered by the COA included irregularities in various construction components of the project.

Some plans and requirements for the project were also incomplete while there was no listing of expenses for toilets, seats and other facilities in the sports dome.

An item that was bought for P13.8 million was declared by the COA as "not usable and without substance and expressed purpose."

The City Hall was accused of keeping the COA report from the public. The report surfaced only when acting City Engineer Joaquin Cui asked the COA about the request of contractor Archipelago Builders for the release of P14.4 million in "retention money."

The retention money is the amount kept on hold to pay for possible construction defects in the project.

But Ledesma said it was still early to conclude that the project was overpriced because the review is still incomplete.

"No one can say that the project is overpriced or the report was hidden or suppressed. In fact, there is a portion of the COA report that is not yet complete. The project will still be re-evaluated," Ledesma said.

He said there will be a reevaluation based on the additional documents requested by the COA.

The COA report, he said, was not kept under wraps.

Ledesma said the retention money has not been released by City Hall because under the contract between the city and the contractor, this can only be released upon the completion of the project.

As of now, the project is about 60 percent complete and the construction has never been stopped even with the pending case between the city and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) over environmental requirements.

The construction of the Artica Dome started in June last year. It was scheduled to be finished next month.

The dome is built on a 30,000 square meter lot in the vicinity of C.P. Garcia Highway in Langub, Talomo District. It will be a fully air-conditioned multipurpose facility with a seating capacity for 15,000 persons.

Earlier, the DENR said the city government must take full responsibility if something bad happens when the construction is finished.

The DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau earlier released a study concluding that the sports dome is constructed near a fault line.

The DENR here issued a cease-and-desist order against the city last year, claiming among others that the sports dome was unsafe. *Ayan Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

THE RISEN CHURCH

What man has destroyed, man has to rebuild. Workers rush repair work on the St. Peter's Church in Lamitan, Basilan that was destroyed during fighting between Abu Sayyaf bandits and government soldiers.

DENNIS SABANGAN

NPA leader tagged in Agui slay

CAMP MELCHOR DE LA CRUZ, Isabela—A New People's Army leader was tagged by the military as the mastermind of the June 12 assassination of outgoing Cagayan Rep. Rodolfo Aguinaldo and his aide in Tuguegarao City, a military intelligence report said.

The report identified the suspect as Wilfredo Valencia of the NPA's Cagayan Valley regional front committee. He is reportedly the rebel group's "main strategist" in Northern Luzon.

Valencia, according to the military, is using the aliases Ka Ikoy and Victor Servidores of the NPA's Fortunato Camus Command.

Servidores recently issued a three-page statement owning responsibility for the killing of Aguinaldo and his driver-bodyguard PO2 Joey Garro.

He said Aguinaldo was killed because of his "blood debts" and for "his long list of heinous crimes against the people."

Military and police records showed that Valencia was among those charged with the killing of Brig. Gen. Josefino Manayao, 502nd brigade commander, and 12 other soldiers in an ambush in Jones, Isabela on June 27 last year.

Records also showed that Valencia was arrested last May 14 for possession of a shotgun in Enrile town but escaped the next day from the town jail. He reportedly asked permission from jail guards to go to the toilet and escaped.

Military intelligence reports said Valencia frequented Cagayan Valley to supervise liquidation plots on suspected "anti-revolutionary people."

He was also tagged as one of the guerrillas who engaged government soldiers in a gunfight in November 1999 in Cagayan where a certain Ka Agunoy was killed. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Lack of forest rangers blamed for forest loss

BAGUIO CITY—The forest covers of Baguio City and Benguet are dwindling as the areas don't have enough forest rangers to monitor logging activities.

Julio Lopez, planning officer of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro), said the lack of forest rangers has encouraged loggers to illegally cut trees in the protected areas of Benguet.

Lopez said the unabated cutting of Benguet pine trees has been the Cenro's problem for the past 10 years.

He said only eight forest rangers are designated to watch over at least 103,000 hectares of forest area in Baguio and Benguet.

Lopez said a forest ranger could effectively guard a forest area covering 2,000 hectares only. But in Baguio and Benguet, a forest ranger has to guard 12,875 hectares of forest.

He said the province's eight forest rangers are paid P7,000 a month.

"These forest rangers are able to work only from Monday to Friday and only in daytime, so it is easy for the perpetrators to sneak into the forests to cut trees," he told reporters here.

Lopez said illegal loggers choose pine trees because of the increasing demand for pinewood in the construction industry, both in the Cordillera and the lowlands.

Lawyer Romeo Bravo, Cenro officer, said they could not hire more forest rangers due to lack of money.

Lopez said the DENR could only blame the lack of personnel whenever illegally cut trees are seized and illegal logging are reported to their office.

He said they have been asking the national DENR for additional budget to hire more forest rangers in Baguio and Benguet but their request has not been acted upon.

Last year, Cenro personnel seized 1,800 pine trunks in the Benguet towns of Atok, Itogon and Kabayan and in Baguio City. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

4 docs suspended for operating pharmacy

By Alex Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Ombudsman Aniano Desierto has ordered the suspension of four doctors and the supply officer of the Negros Oriental Provincial Hospital (NOPH) for operating a cooperative pharmacy inside the hospital that competed with the hospital's pharmacy.

Ordered suspended for six months without pay were Doctors Teresito Obeta, Wevina Fuentes, Felix Sy and Zenaida Jusep and supply officer Vincent Padayhag.

They were found guilty of violating Section 9 of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, which enjoins public officials and employees to avoid conflict of interest at all times, or divest themselves of such interests.

The Ombudsman cleared Provincial Health Officer Dr. Felimon Flores, Bureau of Food and Drugs employee Manon Iglesia, pharmacist Enrelita Lagahit and clerk Georgina Mutia for lack of merit.

The decision, dated May 18, was received by the Provincial Attorney's Office on June 15.

Gov. George Arnaiz said the ruling was "unfair and unjust." The doctors and the supply officer, he said, would appeal their case to the Supreme Court.

The case stemmed from a complaint filed by Vice Gov. Edgar Teves and eight provincial board members alleging that the doctors, who run the NOPH pharmacy, also operate the COOP Botica, which is has a bigger stock of medicines frequently prescribed by the same doctors.

The NOPH pharmacy, on the other hand, said it had less or no stock of frequently prescribed drugs and medicines and supplies. The pharmacy was overstaffed with three pharmacists who report for work on the same shift, the complainants said.

The doctors said then Gov. Emilo Macias II, who was also NOPH administrator, had encouraged them to put up the COOP Botica because the hospital pharmacy lacked funds following the devolution of the hospital management from the Department of Health to the provincial government.

The doctors were board members of the Negros Oriental Provincial Hospital Consumers and Credit Cooperative, Inc. (NOPHCCC) that established the pharmacy in 1997 with a P1.3 million government loan through the Tulong sa Tao NGO Micro-Credit Program and P250,000 from the Coca-Cola Bottlers Co., Inc.

While they were NOPHCCC board members, they said they were not NOPH administrators and had no hand in hospital contracts or in the formulation of hospital policies, especially on the management and operation of the NOPH pharmacy.

They said the complainants failed to prove that they were guilty of conflict of interest in operating the pharmacy inside the hospital.

But the Ombudsman ruled that it was not necessary to prove that there was actual conflict of interest, only that there was a possibility that conflict of interest may take place.

Roco lifts suspension of DECS exec

ILOILO CITY—The appeal of parents, teachers and news organizations saved a regional director of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) here from serving his full 15-day suspension handed by Education Secretary Raul Roco.

Roco lifted the suspension of regional director Victoriano Tirol on June 13, the fifth day of his supposed 15-day suspension.

Tirol was suspended after Roco received reports that public schools in Iloilo collected fees from parents during enrollment in violation of Roco's DECS Order No. 22.

Most of the complaints were aired over radio stations by callers who withheld their identities.

DECS Order No. 22 issued on May 24 prohibits school officials from collecting school fees or contributions during enrolment in public schools.

Donations for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the Philippine National Red Cross and the government's anti-tuberculosis drive may be collected after institutions receiving the contributions submit their financial reports to the DECS, the order stated. *Ma. Diosa Labiste and Gerry Pagharion, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Group demanding bases cleanup turns to Canadian NGO for help

CLARK FIELD, Pampanga—The People's Task Force for Bases Cleanup has asked a Canada-based public health group to help Guam Rep. Robert Underwood persuade the US Congress to appropriate funds for the assessment and clean up of toxic wastes left in former American military bases in the Philippines.

Myrla Baldonado, executive director of the task force, said her group would ask the Institute of Concern for Public Health in Canada to provide Underwood the information and proof that the US military had left toxic wastes in the former Clark Air Base here and the former Subic Naval Base in Zambales.

The ICPH, headed by Dr. Rosalie Bertell, conducted a study of 13 communities outside the Clark special economic zone in 1998.

The study showed that many residents of six of the 13 communities were suffering from sickness associated with exposure to toxic wastes.

The Washington-based Filipino-American Coalition for Environmental Solutions (Faces) earlier reported that Underwood had asked the US Congress to amend the Foreign Relations Authorization Act to be more specific on US response to the toxic waste problem in the Philippines, particularly in Clark and Subic.

Underwood proposed that an independent environmental study be conducted in the two former US military bases.

The information sent to reporters here by Faces said Underwood's proposal has already reached the US Senate.

Faces quoted Underwood as telling the US Congress that "both our nations share a profound concern for the quality of the environment, and the US has a moral obligation to the Philippines to cooperate in ameliorating this environmental degradation."

Underwood was recently in the Philippines where he met with children who were either born or conceived at the Clark Air Base Command Evacuation Center (Cabcom) and who are now suffering from cerebral palsy and other diseases believed caused by exposure to toxic wastes.

The site is a former motor pool of the US Air Force.

The PTFBC has recorded more than 100 deaths among former Cabcom evacuation center residents believed to be related to toxic waste contamination and exposure since 1995.

The environmental baseline study conducted by the US-based Weston International earlier confirmed the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls at the Wagner Aviation Grounds while chlordane, heptachlor and petroleum hydrocarbons were found at the area of the Philippine exchange motor pool here.

The Weston International study has identified 14 contaminated sites inside the 4,400-hectare main zone of this former US military base. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Ma, daughter freed before start of peace talks

(From page A1)

be a complete "cessation of hostilities" in exchange for economic development.

The MILF, which has been at war with the Philippine government for 23 years, was born out of a schism with the Moro National Liberation Front in 1978.

It was left out of the 1996 negotiations between the government and the MNLF, which resulted in a peace agreement.

Libya, Indonesia and Malaysia sponsored the 1996 negotiations.

Independent state

In Davao City, Ghazali Jaafar, MILF vice chair for political affairs, said a "separate independent state" was still the vision of the secessionist group.

But he conceded that the issue was a "ticklish" one. "The government will never accept the demand for a separate independent state," Jaafar, speaking in Filipino, said in an interview Tuesday afternoon.

"It is insisting that the only solution is freedom. But right now this is not being discussed," he said.

Jaafar said the issue of an independent state might be presented later when the government and the MILF peace panels shall have agreed to continue talking even after forging an agreement on the three substantive issues up for discussion in Tripoli.

These issues include a review of past agreements, the development of conflict areas, and ancestral domain.

Jaafar said the Bangsamoro people would never accept an autonomous government.

He cited past agreements, including that forged during the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos' term, when the government agreed to set up an autonomous government for Western and Central Mindanao.

"It was not effective," he pointed out, adding that the concept of an autonomous government was still not accepted during the term of President Corazon Aquino.

"Up to now the problem continues," he said.

Jaafar said the Bangsamoro people wanted a lasting solution to the Mindanao problem.

He said the MILF had always batted for the holding of a referendum to chart the destiny of the Bangsamoro people.

Under a referendum, which he described as the most effective formula to end the Mindanao problem, Jaafar said the MILF would have these four options:

- To remain part of the Philippine state under the status quo.
- To establish a federal form of government.
- To pursue an autonomous government.
- To set up an independent Bangsamoro state.

However, Jaafar said, the proposal for a referendum has yet to be formally submitted.

He said that for now, the MILF would focus on the three issues for discussion in Tripoli.

Misuari

Gov. Nur Misuari of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is slowly losing his grip on power and influence.

After being ousted as MNLF chair by a majority of the group's executive committee members, Misuari suffered yet another blow when he was denied a visa by the Libyan government.

He had intended to lead the MNLF delegation at the opening of the peace talks between the Philippine government and the MILF.

According to Dr. Farouk Hussein, chief of the MNLF foreign affairs commission, the rejection of Misuari's application for a visa indicated that Libya recognized the reforms within the MNLF leadership.

Hussein believes that with Libya's position of influence in the Organization of Islamic Conference, other OIC member-countries will follow suit in recognizing the changes in the MNLF.

Foremost among the reforms initiated by a majority of the MNLF executive committee members was Misuari's "'promotion" as chair emeritus, a position that is largely nominal.

The chairmanship was declared temporarily vacant, and its role assumed by the 15-member committee.

Misuari, however, has refused to accept his new position in the MNLF.

He has called for an extraordinary two-day assembly of the Bangsa Moro People's National Consultative Congress, in an apparent effort to reassert his control over the MNLF rank and file.

But Libya appeared to have given its blessings to the MNLF executive committee by granting visas to seven of its members to enable them to sit as observers at the peace negotiations in Tripoli.

Those granted visas were Hussein, vice chair Hatimil Hassan, secretary general Muslimen Sema, chief of staff Yusof Jikiri, military intelligence chief Abdul "Kong" Sahiron, information officer Karun Yusop, Kutawato Attara, and Utoh Salem Cutan.

From Libya, the group will proceed to Mali to attend the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference, which starts on June 26.

Hussein expects the conference to formally recognize the executive committee as the legitimate representative of the MNLF, which has observer status with the OIC. ***Reports from Hernan P. de la Cruz and Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Rocky Nazareno in Manila; AFP; Reuters***

Miriam tutors Loi

(From page A1)

she hasn't decided whether to ask for political advice from her husband, Joseph.

Santiago, whose sharp and irrepressible tongue has earned her a reputation as a firebrand, apparently gave the soft-spoken former first lady some unexpected advice: Keep quiet.

"I had a chat with Miriam and she gave me some tips. She said I should be a keen observer . . . see what others are doing," Senator-elect Estrada told reporters before attending a Senate "orientation seminar" for newly proclaimed lawmakers.

On the other hand, her husband, the ousted President and former senator, hasn't exactly been a treasure chest of legislative wisdom.

"He just cracked jokes on my being a senator now," she said.

Unlike former US first lady Hillary Clinton, who reportedly consulted heavily with husband Bill on political strategy in her successful bid for a US Senate seat, Loi did not seem keen on picking her spouse's brain.

Asked whether she was going to consult her husband on the matter of engaging in "critical collaboration" with the Macapagal administration, Dr. Estrada said: "I don't know if I'm going to ask him because I can think for myself."

And she does not appear ready to follow in the footsteps of Mr. Estrada, who reportedly consulted a *feng shui* expert on the layout of his former Senate office.

"I don't believe in *feng shui*," she said.

Estrada, a psychologist, said she was "doing some studies because this is a different kind of ballgame."

"I've done a lot of readings on medicine, but this is different: lawmaking, debates," she added.

Asked to respond to criticism about whether she can deliver the congressional goods, Estrada said: "Let's see."

It isn't only the good doctor who is under the magnifying glass before the 12th Congress convenes on July 23.

Indeed, senior members of the Senate are expressing curiosity about how the neophytes will fare—especially former broadcaster Noli de Castro, who leads the pack of new senators.

Amid both high and low expectations, De Castro and Senator-elect Francisco Pangilinan have requested that they be given private tutorials by the Senate staff on the nuts and bolts of holding office in the Upper Chamber.

Estrada, Pangilinan, De Castro and Ralph Recto were the only new lawmakers who attended yesterday's orientation briefing on the basics of legislative work, such as Senate rules and protocol.

Among the four, Senate Secretary Lutgardo Barbo noted that De Castro asked the most questions.

"His first question was, 'When are we moving in?'" Barbo said. Neophyte senators can occupy their offices at noon on June 30, after outgoing senators have left.

The mood was light during the one-hour seminar.

At one point, Pangilinan stood up to ask whether the Senate was going to administer psychological tests on their staff.

De Castro quickly turned to Pangilinan, and joked: "Do you mean senators will also be subjected to a psychological exam?"

Loi didn't ask any questions.

The only question from Recto was relayed through a staff member who asked Barbo whether the senator-to-be could have an ashtray because he wanted to smoke.

"I had to tell him that the Senate is a smoke-free building," Barbo said.

Shabu haul, jailed pusher missing

(From page A1)

ing after the arresting team found 489 grams of shabu in her car. No bail had been recommended in her case.

The escape, which was initially kept under wraps by NarcGroup authorities, was discovered shortly before noon. A manhunt was immediately conducted.

Later in the afternoon, Chief Supt. Reynor Gonzales, NarcGroup head, ordered an investigation of Manansala's escape and sacked his men who were directly responsible for the incident.

In Occidental Mindoro, members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the Mamburao municipal police are tracking down suspects in the shabu theft. Senior Insp. Gaudencio Pukyutan of the CIDG Regional Office 4 heads the joint team.

Paguio, the Mamburao police chief, said the stolen shabu had already been presented before the trial court in the case against Chi Chun Lui alias Chun Que and Qui Hui Lao Chang alias Feng Leufe Lao.

The two were arrested on Dec. 3, 1998 at Ambil Island, Barangay Tambo, Looc, Occidental Mindoro. They are at present detained at the Provincial Police Office in San Jose town.

According to Bohol Rep. Ernesto Herrera, the Mindoro theft was not the first time that illegal drugs in the custody of court officers were stolen.

In February, he said, Cebu City prosecutor Rosendo Brillantes was investigated for the disappearance of 288 grams of shabu that was under his custody as evidence.

In June last year, 1.5 kilos of shabu evidence worth P3 million were stolen while in the safekeeping of a Caloocan City trial court judge.

In October last year, thieves broke into the office of a Quezon City trial judge and took with them 1.2 kilos of shabu worth P2.4 million and several firearms.

In September last year, Herrera said, the Supreme Court affirmed a lower court decision penalizing Supt. Romeo Diego of the Western Police District for losing confiscated drugs to robbers who stopped his car while he was on his way to court to present the contraband as evidence.

Diego was convicted of malversation through negligence and sentenced to 17 years in prison for the loss of six kilos of shabu worth P12 million.

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Manila – Cagayan de Oro	488	976
Manila – Dumaguete	400	800
Manila – Cebu	356	712
Manila – Tacloban	353	706
Manila – Bacolod	299	598
Manila – Iloilo	281	562

SECTOR IN EITHER DIRECTION	SINGLE CREDIT PREMIUMILES	PROMO PREMIUMILES
Cebu – Zamboanga	269	538
Manila – Roxas	250	500
Manila – Kalibo	250	500
Cebu – Davao	250	500
Iloilo – Cebu	250	500
Bacolod – Cebu	250	500
Davao – Zamboanga	250	500

Summit CLUB
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Hospital arrest for now

(From page A1)

Tests confirmed doctors' suspicions that Estrada suffered from "chronic obstructive pulmonary disease," the memorandum said.

It said doctors recommended Estrada to quit smoking, make use of broncho-dilators, and avoid "environmental factors that can trigger acute exacerbation and contribute to progression of disease."

Ombudsman won't oppose

The court also directed the Philippine National Police to allow hospital confinement "considering that the hearing on the petition for bail of (co-accused lawyer) Edward Serapio is scheduled" from June 25-28.

The Estradas are supposed to attend those hearings apart from their scheduled arraignment on plunder charges on June 27.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto indicated that he would not oppose the hospital-stay order as long as the Estradas were returned to their detention center in Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, after June 28.

"Remaining at the hospital may be a practical consideration" due to the security problem of transporting the detainees to and from the Sandiganbayan and the camp detention center, Desierto said.

"This is not hospital arrest. Rather, this is only confinement and we (tolerate) it because of Estrada's medical condition," he stressed in an interview.

Going to SC

But private prosecutors assisting the government said they would question the ruling, claiming the Sandiganbayan was biased in favor of Estrada and warning that he could soon be allowed house arrest.

"We are going to the Supreme Court because this will make a mockery of our laws that say we should be equal (in dispensing) justice," prosecutor Leonard de Vera said.

Desierto said it was too late to oppose the Sandiganbayan's decision. "But immediately after June 28, they should return to Sta. Rosa. After all the court proceedings, we would insist that they return there," he added.

Estrada lawyer Raymond Fortun said the defense panel welcomed the "very good development" and expressed hope the court would go further and order Estrada detained at his mansion in North Greenhills.

"We see a lot of compassion on the part of the court that for medical reasons (former) President Estrada will continue to be detained at the VMMC," Fortun said.

Vigorous objection

In a three-page motion, the Ombudsman objected to the five-day furlough granted to Jinggoy, and argued that the ex-mayor was a "maximum security risk."

Instead of being allowed to return to his house near the mayor's office after work hours for those five days, government lawyers want Jinggoy to be escorted back to the military hospital in Quezon City at 5 p.m. each day.

The motion was filed days after the court heard the defense's arguments for the temporary pass. In that hearing, government lawyers did not oppose the defense request.

The court yesterday also allowed Jinggoy to undergo additional medical tests on his heart at the Makati Medical Center, but ordered him returned to the VMMC "upon completion of the procedures."

Jinggoy's heart

The outgoing mayor received the news with ambivalence.

"I have been feeling that something's wrong with my heart, but I'm not so sure if I want to know what it is exactly," he said.

He also asked his family's critics not to make a big deal out of his visit on Tuesday to his paternal grandmother, "Lola Mary."

Anti-Estrada groups had pointed out that the visit was a violation of a condition "strictly" limiting Jinggoy's movements between his residence in North Greenhills and the municipal hall.

Jinggoy maintained that he did not exactly disobey the court, since he and his grandmother live on the same street.

"Besides, I was just being human. My grandmother is 96 years old and wheelchair-bound . . . She couldn't visit me and my dad in jail," he said.

"My *lola* has missed me a lot and she wanted to know my dad's condition. I was just paying my respects to her," he added.

Palace on annex

In light of the court order for hospital confinement, Malacañang yesterday said it was up to the PNP to determine whether to resume construction of a controversial hospital annex where to detain the Estradas.

"It depends on the PNP and in coordination with the (Armed Forces)—whether they need an annex," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao told reporters.

But, he added, "so far it's been put on hold (and there is) no discussion yet on whether" the project would be resurrected.

President Macapagal tried to build the special wing to serve as Estrada's place of confinement, but an outcry from her own supporters and the Roman Catholic Church forced her to abort the project.

Tiglao defended the aborted proposal, saying, "it's not a summer cottage. It's an annex for security purposes."

He also said it was "pointless" for Malacañang to react to the latest court order.

"It's pointless for us now whether we welcome it or not. It's entirely the Sandiganbayan's decision. We don't have any influence at all on the Sandiganbayan," he said.

On June 9, the same court had denied the Estradas' motion to be placed under house arrest.

The two were supposed to be transferred to Fort Sto. Domingo, but the court gave 10 days for the government doctors to recommend otherwise.

The VMMC doctors said in a first medical bulletin that the Estradas were fit to travel, but amended the recommendation in the second memo used yesterday as the basis for the court's resolution.

The Sandiganbayan yesterday also issued several subpoenas to witnesses, including Equitable PCIBank executives Clarissa Ocampo and Manuel Curato, directing them to appear in court on June 27. ***With reports from Juliet L. Javellana, Armand N. Nocum, AFP and AP***

Basilan terrain gives troops hard time

(From page A1)

pected this week.

"It will happen soon. The troops are hoping for some action this week," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"It will be a matter of physics. Two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time," he said.

Gepilano said that while no clashes were occurring, this did not mean a lull in military operations.

He also denied that there was "overkill" in the deployment of eight Army and Marine battalions in the province to go after an estimated 400 bandits.

"We have more than enough forces. We are just beefing them up because Basilan is too wide an area," Gepilano said.

He said the heavy deployment of troops was needed to "corner" the bandits in a small area.

He refused to identify the actual site of the operations, saying he did not want to jeopardize the lives of the hostages.

The bandits are believed to be in a jungle area about 20 kilometers from Isabela.

They are believed holding 26 American and Filipino hostages—seven of the original 20 taken from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan on May 27, four from a hospital in Lamitan town on June 2, and 15 from the Golden Harvest Plantation in Lantawan town on June 11.

The Associated Press reported that the father of Filipino hostage Lalaine Chua, who was among those taken from Dos Palmas, yesterday asked her captors anew to tell him she was still alive.

Appealing to Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya over Radio Mindanao Network, Benito Chua said: "We are facing a very tough time and are very worried. We love our daughter. Let her call me to give me some peace of mind."

"If you are listening, Mr. Sabaya, we just want to hear the voice of Lalaine," Chua said, sounding as if he were about to cry.

Chua had earlier aired a similar appeal.

Concrete planning

Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar said the seeming lull in the military operations was a result of the concrete and objective planning to stamp out the Abu Sayyaf.

He said that the bandits were still in Basilan, and that their "contacts" in the towns of Tipo-Tipo, Lantawan, Tuburan and Sumisip were merely conducting diversionary tactics.

He added that community defense forces had been strengthened in Isabela, the capital, and in Lamitan and other towns.

Gepilano said the reported payment of ransom by the hostages' families had somehow affected the military operations.

"Naturally, we don't want that to happen. Our soldiers are risking their lives to rescue the hostages. But our efforts will be for naught if ransom is paid," he said in Filipino.

As tensions ran high in Isabela, three men claiming to be members of the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front were arrested on suspicion of being Abu Sayyaf gunmen.

They were detained on charges of homicide and robbery as they returned from being accepted into a government amnesty program available to MILF members who turn in their weapons.

Although the military complained about the arrests, a guard at Isabela City Prison, Irineo Solano, said the three remained behind bars because of a court order for their jailing.

The MILF has consistently denied any involvement with the Abu Sayyaf. It started peace talks with the Philippine government yesterday in Libya.

Vigilantes

At Camp Melchor de la Cruz in Isabela province, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva said he did not favor turning ordinary Basilan residents into vigilantes even if the move were intended as defense against the Abu Sayyaf.

"It is bad to be a vigilante," Villanueva told reporters during a visit yesterday.

Villanueva was reacting to reports that Basilan residents had resorted to *hamurabi* (a Muslim practice of self-defense) because of the military's supposed failure to protect communities from the Abu Sayyaf.

"Vigilantism does not sit well with our civilized system. It is not good if we make it a policy," he said.

Saying that the AFP was well organized, Villanueva called on Basilan residents and officials not to resort to *hamurabi* and to "give the military time to do it."

Lantawan Mayor Tahira Ismael had admitted that even without being deputized by the government, her constituents armed themselves and joined the military in going after the bandits that attacked the town on June 11.

But Villanueva said the people should have patience. "*Mapupulbos din sila* (The bandits will be crushed)," he said.

He recalled that the military offensive against the Abu Sayyaf during the Estrada administration took even longer than the present operations.

"When we were going after the Abu Sayyaf in Talipao, Sulu, it took us six months," he said.

Villanueva admitted that the people's frustrations and anger resulting from the destruction wrought by the Abu Sayyaf might have been the reason for their eagerness to have the bandits finished off.

The Abu Sayyaf has killed two Filipino captives, beheading one, and claimed to have decapitated one of their three American hostages. But the body of the American, Guillermo Sobero, has yet to be found.

57,946 persons

About a fourth of the civilian population in Basilan and a sixth of its total villages are affected by the ongoing military operations, according to the National Disaster Coordinating Council.

In a report, the NDCC said 57,946 persons representing 10,357 families had been affected since fighting broke out between government troops and the bandits on June 1.

Of the number, 7,233 persons or 1,457 families have been totally displaced.

Three civilians were killed and 10 others were wounded, the NDCC said.

Damage to property is placed at P14.350 million, and relief assistance from the government has reached P2.2 million.

According to military figures, Basilan has a total population of 295,570. The 1,327-square-kilometer province has 255 barangays and seven municipalities.

The NDCC also reported that 41 villages from six towns in the province had been affected by the fighting—16 in Tuburan; 10 in Lamitan; eight in Lantawan; three each in Sumisip and Tipo-Tipo; and one in Maluso.

The AFP has deployed eight battalions, which are backed by air and naval units, the Special Action Force and regular units of the Philippine National Police, the Civilian Armed Force Geographical Units, and armed civilian volunteers.

According to military reports, seven Abu Sayyaf gunmen have been killed, and an undetermined number wounded.

The government has lost 16 soldiers, police officers and militiamen, and 56 more have been wounded.

Holistic approach

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed yesterday Executive Order No. 21 forming a Cabinet oversight committee that would devise and implement a "holistic approach" to the country's insurgency and internal security problems.

Her spokesperson, Rigoberto Tiglao, said initial efforts concerning internal security problems would be concentrated on Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Sulu.

"The idea here is for this Cabinet oversight committee to establish similar bodies either on the regional or provincial level to coordinate all efforts," Tiglao told reporters.

He said Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi had "obviously become an internal security problem for Mindanao."

Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo will chair the new committee. Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes will serve as vice chair. ***With reports from Carlito Pablo and Christine Avendaño in Manila; Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; AFP; Reuters***

'I'm not a courier . . .

(From page A1)

His denials were supported by Teresa Ganzon, who was released ahead of her husband Francis, and Patrick Jao.

Saño interviewed Teresa and Jao during his Manila radio program yesterday to air their collective denial that they had paid ransom.

But the military practically admitted that the relatives may have indeed paid the Abu Sayyaf saying it cannot blame them.

"We can only appeal to their sense of patriotism but we know deep inside them they're also pleading, 'can you blame us'," AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said yesterday.

Adan said the choice of whether or not to pay ransom for a loved one in grave danger "is a matter of individual and personal values."

Adan stressed the military was in no position to either confirm or deny the reports as the country lacked a system that could track down the movements of huge sums of money.

Adan also said the military was unaware of the alleged activities of Saño.

'Believe us'

Over Saño's radio program, Teresa begged the media and the public to believe them when they say they did not pay ransom.

"I hope they will believe us. We have said that the release of my husband and Kimberly was a gesture of goodwill and even the President can prove that because she has the letter that Francis brought when he was released. And that was the only reason why they were released. I believe (the Abu Sayyaf) really want to have a peaceful solution to this crisis," she said in the interview in Saño's program "Bantay OCW."

Just as she did when she was still in captivity, Teresa used the interview to appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo to open lines of communication with the Abu Sayyaf for the safety of the remaining hostages.

To validate his role in the hostage situation as a mere conduit for the airing of the appeals of the hostages' relatives, Saño replayed the tape of Benito Chua, who was on the verge of tears, asking the Abu Sayyaf to be allowed to speak to his daughter.

'My friend'

"He is my friend," he said of Jorge Baviera who had also been tagged as working with Saño to deliver money to the emissary of the Abu Sayyaf.

For the release of Francis Ganzon and Kimberly Jao on Saturday, Saño and Baviera reportedly met Kimberly's father and representatives of the other relatives of the kidnapped victims and brought them to a hotel.

There the money from the relatives was turned over to a lady emissary of the bandits, according to the INQUIRER report.

Saño admitted he was at the Orchid Garden hotel because, he said, he stays there whenever he is in Zamboanga.

Saño was also photographed at Villamor Air Base when Kimberly and Ganzon arrived from Zamboanga City on Saturday. He was also observed in a huddle with Ganzon's wife, Teresa.

Saño claimed he was at Villamor to fetch Bayoging, who was on the plane dispatched by the President for the freed hostages.

In Saño's radio program, Teresa and Jao both said they met Saño for the first time at Villamor Air Base.

Teresa said she and her husband didn't want any media interviews but that Saño asked her to talk on his radio program to deny reports about the payoff.

Alias

During the radio show, Teresa was slightly confused that the one talking to him was a Cesar Padilla, whom she knew to be Saño. It turned out that Padilla was Saño's pseudonym.

"You know Stef or Cesar, if that is true I will admit it. But how can that be when I just met you in Villamor. And even if you asked me (for money) I will probably ask you 'For what?'," she said laughing.

"That is not true. You and I know it's not true. I hope the people will believe us because these charges are ruining our reputation. We have no amount like that to give away and I'm not sitting on that kind of money," she said in Filipino.

Jao also said he met Saño aka Padilla face to face only in Villamor Air Base on Saturday.

"Actually I approached Stef so that I would know the condition of my daughter. But I didn't know Stef," Jao said in Filipino.

He said he "contacted" Saño to help him air his appeal to Sabaya.

When Saño asked him about reports that he (Saño) asked for a mobilization fund, Jao said: "That's not true. I can hardly produce the ransom money. How can I do that?"

Teresa lamented that reports in media about ransom paid by the families of hostages have been aggravating their lives.

"We are begging the media, please believe us and stop these reports in newspapers and broadcast (networks) which are all baseless," she said.

"We suffered (in captivity) and now that we have returned, we face a different atmosphere. We cannot return to our house, we're not sure if our children are safe in school because of the kind of attention that they are giving to us," she added.

Teresa said the current media reports were "very far" from what she learned as a journalism student.

"I don't know that this is the right way (of reporting news). What more does the public need to know about us and what happened? I hope that with this statement, they will give us space to restore normalcy to our lives," she said.

Jao also appealed to media and the public to give his family peace.

Teresa again urged the President to negotiate with the Abu Sayyaf for the release of the remaining hostages.

"And we are praying that even if the government has other options, it should open its lines of communication with the Abu Sayyaf so that there will be a peaceful solution to this crisis," she said.

In the clear

To clear himself further, Saño pounced on an INQUIRER report on Wednesday stating that Sabaya dealt directly with the families.

It had reported another version of the ransom payment of Reghis Romero: That he may have paid not P3 million as earlier alleged but P24 million.

The money was allegedly split among a "top local official," the Abu Sayyaf, and a top-ranking military official in Mindanao.

"It clearly shows that I have no part in it because they didn't need a conduit. And it showed that no money went to any conduit. Never did I participate in any activity (concerning the negotiations)," he said.

Adan took exception to the report that a military official received portions of Romero's ransom payment.

"It is a fabricated lie and is insulting to our brave soldiers in Basilan, Jolo and elsewhere in Mindanao. We do not play with the lives of our men or gamble with them," he said.

Adan added it was "enemy propaganda." He counseled that the "media should not allow itself to be used."

Ping: I have nothing to do with kidnaps

(From page A1)

Berroya, as well as Armed Forces intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus had fed Ms Macapagal with false info.

Lacson said he had nothing to do whatsoever with the kidnapping of Mary Grace Rosagas, a daughter Chinese-Filipino businessman Robert Cheng, on the morning of June 18 in Quezon City. Three of the kidnappers were reportedly wearing police uniforms.

Rosagas, her driver and a bodyguard were freed 17 hours later after her family paid a still undetermined ransom to the kidnappers.

Ms Macapagal and Lina raised questions about the kidnapping and release of Rosagas, indicating the abduction might have been staged to embarrass the government.

The Quezon City police investigators, however, said Wednesday the kidnapping was anything but a sinister plot to destabilize the government.

"Our investigation indicates that this is a case of plain and simple kidnapping," said Insp. Rudy Jaraza, head of the Central Police District homicide division.

"We have found no leads that would link this to any political motive," Jaraza said.

He said the ransom was delivered in Laguna on Monday night. The kidnappers released Rosagas, her driver and a bodyguard and told them to take a bus to Cubao, Quezon City.

Sotto

Sen. Vicente Sotto also denied charges that the opposition was behind the recent wave of kidnappings in Metro Manila.

"This is a desperate move on the part of the Macapagal administration," Sotto told a local radio station from the United States where he is vacationing.

He admitted knowing the victim and her family.

"They called me up after the kidnapping. They admitted paying the people who abducted their daughter," Sotto said.

"It is saddening that the victims are the ones being accused of engaging in some kind of a plot."

He said he had no idea how much ransom was paid the kidnappers.

For his part, Sen. Gregorio Honasan suggested that the government focus on drawing up measures to stop kidnappings.

Honasan, chair of the Senate committee on peace, unification and reconciliation and vice chair of the Senate committee on defense, raised the possibility the President was being fed raw information that still required verification.

"If indeed a member of the opposition is behind the upsurge of crimes, then the government should gather enough evidence to support its claim so it may file the necessary charges as soon as possible," he said.

"It is rather unfair to make the opposition the convenient scapegoat each time it (the Macapagal administration) is facing a problem," he said.

Strong leads

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza told him that his agency "has strong leads and may crack the case in a week's time."

"They have leads, eyewitnesses and other information on who was behind this," Tiglao told a news briefing.

Government officials and analysts say the wave of kidnaps was one more negative factor behind the recent fall of the peso, which hit a five-month low of 52.35 to the dollar on Tuesday.

Singapore, alarmed by the abduction of four of its businessmen in Manila, has expressed its concern to the Philippines and urged its nationals "to exercise caution, keep informed of developments affecting their personal safety and to remain vigilant."

The British Embassy in Manila said in a travel advisory that three Britons had been kidnapped this year.

"Heightened security awareness is essential," it warned.

Other embassies and the Manila-based Asian Development Bank have urged their nationals and staff to take care.

A 35-year-old British businessman, who has lived in Manila for five years, said some foreigners put themselves at risk by venturing into crime-ridden areas. Some were given spiked drinks in bars or lured away by young women.

But the expatriate community was alarmed by the recent case of a British woman kidnapped in Makati City, he said.

"What does concern us was the fact there was an Englishwoman abducted right outside Glorietta," said the businessman who declined to be identified.

The spate of abductions has prompted the government to go on the offensive. Ms Macapagal has ordered the creation of an anti-crime council to be headed by Justice Secretary Hernando Perez. ***With reports from Christine Avendaño, Ian Esguerra and Reuters***

Baseball's 'Iron Man' retires

BALTIMORE —Nothing lasts forever—not even Cal Ripken Jr. Baseball's Iron Man, who broke Lou Gehrig's record of 2,130 consecutive games, will retire after his 21st season with the Baltimore Orioles—the only team he ever played for. "I don't see this as an ending so much. I'm not stopping something. I'm just moving on," the 40-year-old third baseman said at a news conference Tuesday, which would have been Gehrig's 98th birthday. *AP*

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▨ **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

SPORTS ON TV Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: Senior PGA - The Countrywide Tradition, Final Round at 8 a.m. (r), Highlights at 6 p.m. on Star Sports

U.S. Open Golf Championship Highlights, Third Round at 1 p.m. on Star Sports and 10:30 p.m. on ESPN

LPGA Evian Masters, Third Round at 11:30 p.m. on ESPN

TENNIS: Wimbledon Official Film 1999 at 7 a.m. (r), 2000 at 8 p.m. (r – midnight) on Star Sports

Welcoat shoots for sweep today

GAME TODAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
4:30 p.m.—Awarding ceremonies (MVP, mythical selections)
5:30 p.m.—Welcoat Paints vs Shark Energy Drink

By Dennis Eroa

DEFENDING champion Welcoat Paints aims to complete its domination of Shark Energy Drink when it goes for a sweep of the PBL Chairman's Cup best-of-seven title series today at the Makati Coliseum.

Looking great after winning the last three games, the Paintmasters are driven to snuff the lives out of the Power Boosters and duplicate their 4-0 sweep in last year's initial staging of the Chairman's Cup.

"It's going to be doubly painful if we let Shark off the hook this time," said Welcoat mentor Junel Baculi, obviously referring to last conference's Challenge Cup where his charges squandered a 2-0 lead in the series.

Game Four is set at 5:30 p.m., after the 4:30 awarding ceremonies for the MVP and the mythical selection.

This time, Shark attack may no longer have the bite to gatecrash Welcoat's party because of one important thing—it terribly lacks a take-charge guy, a role essayed by now Purefoods reliever and former PBL finals MVP Roger Yap.

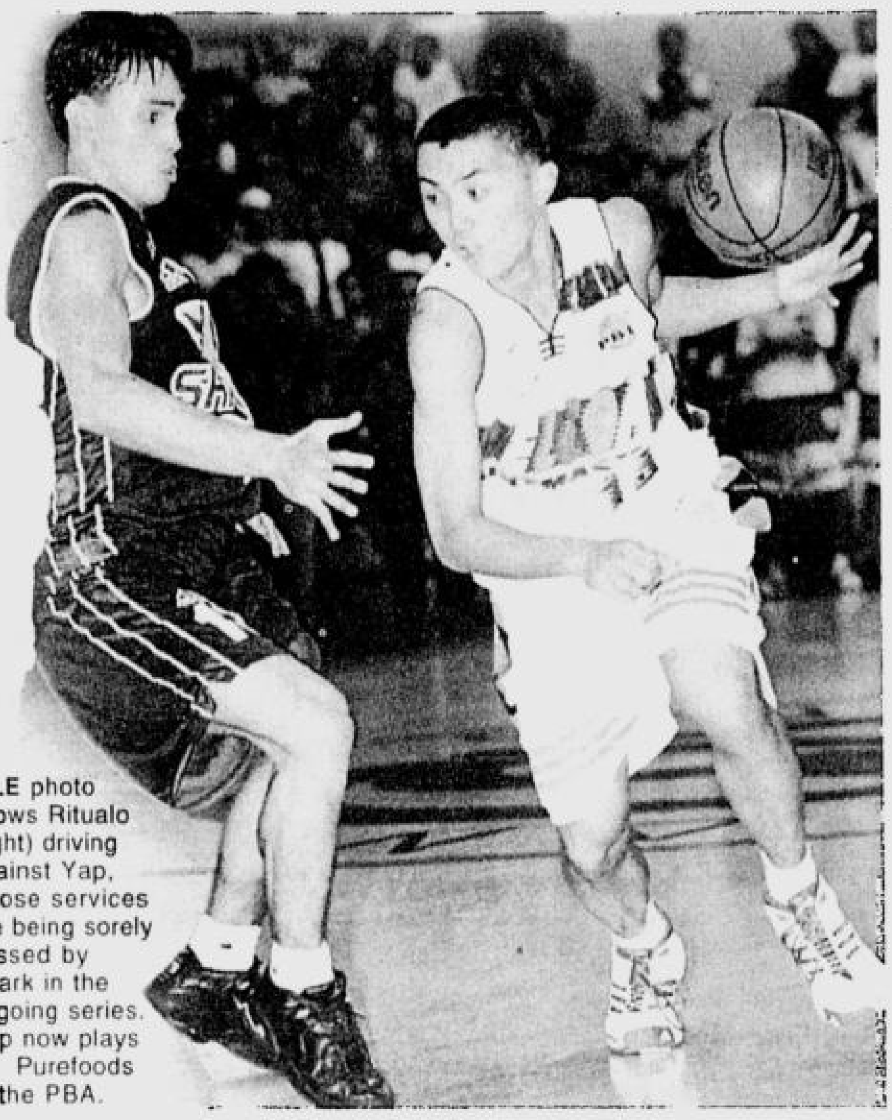
Coach Leo Austria is amenable to Shark's problem. "At the moment, the team is still looking for a leader. We're looking for another Roger Yap."

While saying that the Power Boosters aren't giving up, Austria said that overcoming a 0-3 deficit is like creating a miracle. "Shark has nothing to be ashamed of. We're doing our best."

For the third straight time, Shark failed to get the numbers from MVP Chester Tolomia and Rysal Castro, two members of the Challenge Cup champion squad.

Shark lost Game One (58-57) and Two (80-79, OT) after bungling the game-winning shots.

In contrast, Welcoat is getting superb plays from Ren Ren Ritualo, Jojo Manalo, Celino Cruz, De Ocampo, Brix Encarnacion, Allen Patrimonio and Eugene Tan.



FILE photo shows Ritualo (right) driving against Yap, whose services are being sorely missed by Shark in the ongoing series. Yap now plays for Purefoods in the PBA.

Lito's group files TRO, blasts polls

GONZALO "Lito" Puyat and his Basketball Association of the Philippines yesterday secured a temporary restraining order from the Court of Appeals and questioned the elections conducted by Tiny Literal's faction.

Puyat's group insisted that the elections held by Literal's camp was a clear defiance of the TRO it obtained while the whole exercise was ongoing.

Brigido Dulay, legal counsel of Puyat's BAP, said the poll was done with undue haste, disregarding the finer points of the court order stating that all votes should be cast not later than 12 noon.

"Technically, Mr. Puyat and Freddie Jalasco were still entitled to cast their ballots up to 12 noon even if the polls were already completed," said Dulay, explaining the details of Manila RTC Judge Artemio Tipon's order.

"But they (Literal's group) did it in due haste, a clear defiance of the TRO granted by a higher court," he added.

Puyat's group also claimed that the voters' list appeared padded as only 29 members of the electorate that installed Jalasco could only vote on orders of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Dulay acquired the TRO from Justice Rebecca De Guia-Salvador, presiding judge of the CA 10th division, at about 10 in the morning, while the exercise was going on. *June Navarro*

Shell riders shine

ORMOC CITY—Jovie Saulog ruled the pro 125, Irwin Uypitching topped the expert and Carl Poculan dominated the open production in Shell Advance-Yamaha's day of triumph in the National Motocross Super Series 2001: A Race of Ormoc and PLDT at the Ormoc Sports Complex.

Saulog, dubbed "Ageless Warrior" by motocross fans for his long but colorful exploits on and off the racetrack, pulled off a stunning wire-to-wire victory over former Shell Advance-Yamaha rider Glen Aguilar in the pro 125 category in this event organized by Hartebeest Entertainment Corp. and sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa).

In one of the keenly awaited races, Saulog steered his trusty Yamaha 4-stroke to victory over the younger but less-experienced Aguilar to the delight of a big weekend crowd.

The win was a fitting follow-up for Saulog, who also won over Aguilar in an invitational motocross race in Daraga, Albay last month.

"I'm very, very happy. I really tried very hard to make it and prove that my victory over Glen in Albay is not a fluke," said Saulog, the winningest rider in motocross history with seven titles safely tucked under his belt.

Negros, Ecija win

GAMES TOMORROW
Araullo Gym (Cabanatuan City)
3:00 p.m.—Davao vs Nueva Ecija
Cebu City Coliseum
5:30 p.m.—Negros vs Cebu

By Roy Luarca

THE ABSENCE of their main man only spurred the Negros Slashers to perform better last night as they subdued the LBC Batangas Blades, 90-79, in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase at the University of St. La Salle Coliseum in Bacolod City.

Ruben de la Rosa, Jomar Tierra and Dennis Madrid took up the scoring slack after John Ferriols, the 1998 MVP, sprained his right ankle late in the third quarter, which saw the Slashers behind 66-64.

Big guys Reynel Hugnatan and Cid White, on the other hand, stood out in defense and banged bodies with the Blades' frontliners as the Slashers notched their fifth straight victory in as many starts.

Sans Ferriols, the Slashers surged ahead, 79-70, and then clamped down on the Manila gunners to hand the Blades their second consecutive setback and a 3-2 card.

In Cabanatuan City, the Nueva Ecija Patriots bested the Socsargen Marlins, 108-93.

The Patriots led by as many as 23 points en route to their first win.

Caguioa, Fletcher spark Gin victory

GAMES TOMORROW *(Philsports Arena)*
5:15 p.m.—Purefoods vs Pop Cola
7:30 p.m.—San Miguel vs Mobiline

By June Navarro

MARK Caguioa preserved Ryan Fletcher's heroics as Barangay Ginebra scored a 96-82 victory over Tanduay last night in the PBA Commissioners Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Threatened to be replaced by a new import, Fletcher burned the hoops with 32 points, plucked 18 rebounds and fell an assist short of registering a triple-double to carry the Kings to their second victory in four games.

His superb numbers, however, could have gone down the drain had Caguioa not delivered in the second half.

Caguioa scattered 11 of his 17 markers in the payoff period to frustrate the Rhummasters, who fell to 1-3.

Fletcher's supposed replacement, NBA veteran Jerald Honeycutt, is already in town but still needs to scrape off the rust in his arsenal. Caidic said the Kings' management would still evaluate the situation with respect to Fletcher's replacement.

In the second game, Alaska Milk downed Sta. Lucia Realty, 99-94, for its fourth straight victory. The Realtors dropped to 1-3.

Meanwhile, former Mobiline cager Asi Taulava has submitted additional evidence to the Bureau of Immigration to prove his Filipino citizenship.

Foreign bowlers rip marks

FOREIGN bowlers dominated action in the Boysen-PBC 2001 championships Tuesday, breaking four more records at the Green Valley lanes in Pasig City.

Former world champion Tom Hahl of Finland, now carrying the colors of Singapore, and Malaysia's Lai Kin Ngoh shared the limelight by showing the way in the men's and ladies' class O singles event, respectively.

Hahl fired 1007 pins on games of 264, 236, 268 and 239 to surpass the 1007 of PBAP's C.J. Suarez in singles, and then collected 1793 to erase the 1176 mark of American Purvis Granger in all-events.

Ms Ngoh carded 910 (187, 289, 237, 197) to better the 903 record of PBAP's Liza Clutario in the ladies' singles competition of the tourney sponsored by Boysen Paints and Philippine Sports Commission and supported by Goldilocks, Filkor, Prima Pasta, Bowlmart, Storm products, The Kegel Co and Blueskies crackers.

Three other marks fell by the wayside.

Bowlmart's Miyuki Kubotani and Cecilia Yap combined for 859 pins to better the 851 and PBAP-Bowlmart's Liza Clutario and Liza del Rosario in class O ladies' doubles; Singapore's Yap Seok Kim submitted 1619 to pull away from PBAP's Even Saquing (1605) and Malaysia's Wendy Chai (1595) in class ladies all-events, and Unique's Maricar Arce, Dinah Basuel and Beth Bautista tallied 1039 to topple the 1030 of CAS' ChingCo, Ampelle Alvarez and Sandra Enriques in class B ladies' team.

Kubotani shot 456 on games of 201 and 256, while Yap posted 403 (214, 189) as they took command in the doubles event.

Singaporeans Jesmine Ho, Jennifer Tan and Alice Tay also came up with a remarkable performance of 1279, but this was good only for second place in class O ladies' team, behind the 1326 of RP national bowlers Liza del Rosario, Liza Clutario and Cecilia Yap.

The tourney has lured a big number of crack foreign pintopplers because it also serves as a qualifying round for the Philippine leg of the Asian Bowling Tour sponsored by ESPN.

Wacky steals show

SUBIC BAY—Caltex-Revtev female rider Wacky del Rosario humbled male rivals as she ruled the Novice class anew in the second leg of the Casino Filipino National Superbike Series at the Subic Bay International Raceway here.

The 22-year-old Del Rosario finished third overall in the combined Novice and Expert race of this event sanctioned by Namssa and FIM.

So amazing was Del Rosario that her average laptime was just 0.25 seconds shy of Expert category winner Jolet Jao's output.

Del Rosario is also supported by Metzeler Tires of Caloocan Sales Center, Quickload Ice Plant, Scan Marine, Manila Cordage and World of Health.

RACING TIPS
AT SAN LAZARO By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. Silver Print/Rain Check 2. Happy Return 3. El Magnifico 4. Pinagpala

Race 2—1. Noble House 2. Diligence 3. Winning Post 4. Always

Race 3—1. Darth Vader 2. Venus 3. Summit power

Race 4—1. Pro Bono 2. Heavy Metal 3. Perfect Gift 4. Sweet Justice

Race 5—1. D Gold Hunter 2. Show Money 3. Black Force 4. Fly Away

Race 6—1. Howard Huge 2. Joker's Wild 3. Ringer Kid 4. Pep Up

Race 7—1. Emancipated Belle 2. Peititoner 3. Gabriel's Pet 4. Storm Dancer

Race 8—1. Perfect Nine 2. Mark's Treasure 3. Truthful Lady 4. Queen Jamie

RALLY WINNER
Anthony Halili and Rene Casibang's Toyota Corolla heads for the finish line en route to winning the production category during last Saturday's Petron Rally of Tanay. The team-up posted a total time of 48.05 in the 67-kilometer rally.

Miñoza not joining RP Open

By Jong Arcano

FOR THE second straight year, the country's top professional—Frankie Minoza—will not compete in the Philippine Open golf championship.

Miñoza flew back to Japan last Sunday to resume his campaign in the Japanese Tour. He plays in the cash-rich Japan Golf Tour Championship Iiyama Cup starting today, the first of at least six straight events he is competing in.

His business partner, Thirdy Escano, told the INQUIRER yesterday that Miñoza is bent on keeping his lofty standing in the Japan Tour Order of Merit in his desire to get another crack at the British Open.

The top three players of the OOM, according to Escano, are usually given slots by British Open organizers.

Miñoza's absence notwithstanding, the registry for the 86th edition of the Open set June 28-July 1 is all filled up with 150 players from 18 countries confirmed to vie for a huge total prize money of about P9.5 million.

Japan is sending the biggest delegation of foreigners with 22 while Australia has a contingent of 15 players. Taiwan and the United States have 10 and six, respectively.

The other countries in the cast are Korea with six players, Guam (5), Singapore (3), Hong Kong (3), India (3), South Africa (2), Scotland (2), Myanmar (2), Venezuela (1), Sweden (1), Thailand (1), Ecuador (1) and Malaysia (1).

The Philippine contingent includes 46 professionals to be spearheaded by defending champion Gerald Rosales.

"It is more than satisfying to note that such a big number of foreigners have accepted our invitations for them to play in the Open," said Rod Feliciano, president of the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines.

Already assured of the support of Casino Filipino and San Miguel Beer as copresenters, the sponsorship package for the Open's return to its old home received a major boost with the support of the Herma Group of Companies and Fortune Tobacco.

The other sponsors are Mitsubishi Motors, Hanjin Shipping, Prudentialife Pension Plan, General Milling, Bingo Bonanza, Citra Tollways, Rudy Project, Unilever, Marsman Drysdale, Pyramid Construction, Mizuno, Solahart, Citgo, Wallen Shipping, Executive Golfers Club, The Riviera Golf and Country Club, Philippine Navy, GG&A Club Shares, Electrobus Consolidated, Solahart, Philtec Label, U-Bix, PLDT, Aristocrat Lamps, First Georgetown Ventures, Nextel and Cinnabon.

Female jins clash Sunday

AROUND 500 of the country's leading and upcoming female taekwondo jins will hug the spotlight on Sunday (June 24) when they see action in the 2001 Milo national all-women championships at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

According to Philippine Taekwondo Association president Roberto Aventajado, competition will be conducted in three categories—senior, junior and grade school (all by age and weight)—starting at 9 a.m.

The event aims to show the big strides made by Filipino women in the sport of taekwondo through their newly acquired skills, techniques and styles.

PTA vice president Sung Chon Hong says the tourney, which is also sponsored by Petron, will be participated in by taekwondo bets from all PTA chapters and branches throughout Metro Manila and the provinces as well as those from the different military groups.

The all-women tourney is also part of the PTA's commitment to pursue sports development and support the government's grassroots program.

Adidas Streetball Challenge fires off June 23

THE ADIDAS Streetball Challenge 2001 begins its sixth season this weekend, spiced up by the entry of some of the country's top amateur cagers who are in the 16-18 years old category.

Opening the three-month 3-on-3 meet is the NCR eliminations on June 23 and 24 at SM Megamall where close to 500 teams are expected to take part.

Adidas Philippines officials are optimistic of attracting a huge field because of the rousing victory of the girls' team in the Streetball Asian finals last year.

"Streetball captures the essence of basketball. It is basketball in its purest sense so we expect another heavy turnout this year," said Adidas Philippines marketing and sales director Sonny Nebres.

The Streetball Challenge, Adidas' biggest annual sports project in the grassroots level, compliments the programs of the Basketball Association of the Philippines in exposing the best young cage talents in the country.

All but one of the members of the defending Asian champions, who are from UST, will have to qualify to earn their second finals trip. There will be five divisions in this year challenge with the Streetball on Wheels category, which is open to all ages, making its debut this year.

The other divisions are Midgets (9-11), Juniors (boys 12-15), Seniors (boys 16-18) and girls (18 years and under).

Aside from Adidas, also backing the meet are Gatorade, Absolute Mineral Water, Cebu Pacific, Hotel Intercontinental, Taylor Made, SM Supermalls, Salomon and Glorietta.

The next regional eliminations are set on July 7-8 at SM City Cebu (Visayas), July 21-22 at Rizal Park/Gaisano Mall (Mindanao-Davao) and Aug. 4-5 at Burnham Park (Baguio/Luzon).

The national finals are set on Aug. 18-19 in Manila, with the Asian Finals slated Aug. 25-26 in Hong Kong.

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▨ **On Target: Erap's men behind kidnappings?** A18

▨ **Chinese youth shoots self after brawl** A18

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

They're afraid of Jinggoy

ESTRADA

BY AGNES DONATO

DISGRUNTLED public market vendors in San Juan yesterday snubbed a meeting with Mayor Jinggoy Estrada who has been temporarily released from detention to sort out unfinished business at the municipality where his family held sway for over three decades.

"We are wary that the mayor only summoned us to coerce us to transfer to the basement of the unfinished, new mall," said Hilario Padilla, spokesman of the vendors at the old Agora market who are strongly opposed to the local government's plan to relocate them.

"We are worried that he (Mayor Estrada) would use this meeting to vindicate himself when demolition time comes," Padilla said. "By then, it would be easy for him to say he tried talking to us but we did not listen."

Padilla, secretary of the 800-strong Samahan ng Manininda ng Pamilihang Agora (Samapa), said Estrada called for a 1 p.m. meeting yesterday

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Cell phone robbers kill again

By Jerome Aning

A 40-YEAR-OLD company messenger lost his life and his celluar phone after he was shot by one of two armed men who robbed him and his female companion in Ermita, Manila Tuesday night.

Mario Pansacala, 40, married, a resident of 5 Fifth Ave., Murphy, Cubao, Quezon City, suffered two gunshot wounds in the chest and at the back. He died upon arrival at the Ospital ng Maynila.

The killing was part of a rash of bold assaults being perpetrated by cell phone robbers in the metropolis.

PO3 Rodelio Lingcong of the Western Police District's homicide section said the suspects—both clad in white shirt, jeans and rubber shoes—accosted Pansacala and his female companion Myrna Sanchez around 9:45 p.m. while the pair was chatting along the Manila Bay seawall on Roxas Boulevard in Ermita.

Sanchez said that, an hour earlier, the victim texted her and told her to meet him on the seawall in front of the Ocean Tower restaurant. She said they were so engrossed in their conversation that they failed to notice the approaching suspects.

One of the men poked a gun at the couple while the other took their Nokia 3210 cell phones and Pansacala's wallet.

The victim, according to Sanchez, made a sudden move and the suspect holding the gun probably misinterpreted it as an attempt to resist. A gunshot rang, and Pansacala slumped on the ground bleeding, before the suspect shot him again.

Pansacala was brought to the OsMa but it was already too late.

Description of the suspects has been provided the police by Sanchez.

VACC decries lazy justice system

By Jerome Aning

WITH one eye peering out of blindfolds, members of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption sought to dramatize the state of the country's justice system. JESS YUSON

AN ANTI-CRIME group yesterday said it would withdraw its cases and resort to alternative justice if the country's justice system fails to reform itself in six months.

The Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption said their members and all victims of various crimes "need an alternative justice system that is faster, more efficient and incorruptible."

In a press conference, VACC chair and president Dante Jimenez said the public has been "engulfed in a climate of fear" because "we now have an alarming situation where criminals bomb, kill, rape, abduct or plunder with such mindless ferocity and blatant disregard of the law."

All these, he said, are traced to the slow erosion of public confidence in the country's criminal justice system.

Jimenez refused to describe what an "alternative justice system" his group is seeking, but he said it would be "a system of courts."

He refused to comment when asked if the courts would be similar to the "people's tribunals" and summary hearings being used by vigilante groups and communist hit squads.

VACC members assembled at their office dressed as justice personified, but with one eye peering out of their blindfolds, symbolizing the alleged state of justice in the country.

They also showed the group's bundles of records of cases that have been languishing in the courts.

The VACC leader faulted the judicial, legislative and executive branches of the government for not putting up enough courts to hear thousands of cases. He also hit several Court of Appeals justices for alleged corruption, as well as ordinary judges for not coming to their courts on time to attend to business.

The VACC is following up 600 heinous crimes and more than 200 corruption cases, most of which have been lagging in special criminal courts, the CA, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Sandiganbayan, and other quasi-judicial bodies such as the National Labor Relations Commission.

Jimenez said the slow turning of the wheels of justice is made worse by the Arroyo government's seeming lack of resolve and political will in imposing the death penalty.

He also criticized the legislature for "churning out voluminous laws that have been sitting idle due to lack of funds to implement them."

Jimenez called on lawmakers not to engage in "wasteful oratory and paperwork," and instead channel substantial budget to implement good laws for the benefit of public safety and order.

Jimenez said VACC members would withdraw all their cases from the courts and other judicial bodies at the end of the six-month ultimatum and find other venues to get justice.

Erap's men behind kidnappings?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

PRESIDENT GMA hit the nail on the head when she said that the series of abductions in Metro Manila could be the handiwork of some quarters out to destabilize the government.

She probably suspects that the men of deposed President Estrada are behind the kidnappings and other crimes in the metropolis.

GMA should order Philippine National Police chief Larry Mendoza to keep a tight watch on former officers and members of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

***

If PAOCTF officers and members had the temerity to abduct and murder well-known publicist Bubby Dacer, they are capable of the crimes now being imputed to them.

The PAOCTF operated like a criminal syndicate. We gleaned this from confessions made by some of its members who have confessed to participating in the abduction and murder of Dacer.

And since the former anti-crime superbody worked like a criminal syndicate it also made pacts with criminal gangs on questions of turf.

***

Didn't you notice that during Erap's time there were fewer kidnappings and bank robberies?

Why? Because the big gangs, like the Kuratong Baleleng, were given concessions in exchange for not operating in Metro Manila. The Kuratong Baleleng gang smuggled rice with impunity in Ozamiz City.

If there were kidnappings at that time, they were committed by minor gangs with whom the criminal Erap government did not make compromises. These gangs were liquidated immediately by you know who.

***

Reliable sources told me the PAOCTF was also involved in rice smuggling in Cebu, among other crimes.

The name of Senior Supt. Michael Rey Aquino, former PNP chief and now Senator-elect Panfilo Lacson's fair-haired boy, always cropped up when investigators from the Bureau of Customs made an investigation on rice smuggling in Cebu.

The illegal rice shipments allegedly protected by Aquino were untouched by the authorities.

***

My sources in Cebu said that even without the protection of PAOCTF, rice smuggling continues unabated in that Visayan port up to now.

People with names like Cagan and Espiritu, the sources said, are lording it over the rest of the field in the illegal importation of rice into the country with Cebu as the port of entry.

If those guys no longer enjoy the protection of PAOCTF, then who are their protectors now?

***

I'm not surprised about PAOCTF's involvement in criminal activities and even smuggling.

Some of its officers and members belonged to the infamous Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group (MISG) which employed criminals to go after criminals.

The criminals who were used by the defunct MISG were later killed after they had outlived their usefulness.

Some officers of the MISG were also involved in smuggling of expensive cars. When I was covering that unit for the Manila Bulletin, I saw some very expensive cars parked outside the office of then Lt. Panfilo Lacson.

***

Why doesn't the government detain Dr. Huda Lim, a Red Cross official in Sulu, who allegedly acts as the conduit of ransom payment to the Abu Sayyaf?

If reports about Lim are true, she should be held for conspiring with the bandits since she was not appointed as government negotiator.

Look at Dr. Lim's first name: Huda.

***

Outgoing San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada was a picture of a busy man at his office on the first day of his temporary freedom.

Parang totoo !

You know what this guy did when he was still running the town he inherited from his father? He played *pusoy*, a local poker games, with his cronies during office hours and went to the casinos at night.

***

Suppliers of the Duty Free Philippines (DFP) now get preferential treatment for their products in terms of exposure, access to shoppers, product placements at enviable locations, etc. in the store for a fee, according to disgruntled suppliers.

The disgruntled suppliers cited the case of a whiskey brand, which, despite its reputation of being one of the fastest moving items at the DFP, has been relegated to the back shelves. Its principal, according to my sources, chose not to pay the fees which allegedly only goes to lining the pockets of certain officials at the DFP.

If you take a long look at the organizational set-up, you will see that while the general manager is regularly replaced according to the administration in power, the rest of the officials down the line are retained.

Conventional wisdom dictates that you leave the existing set-up inasmuch as they have in place the mechanisms that allow them to continually fleece the DFP. No wonder they have accumulated debts of over P5 billion.

CHEERS

Beacon of light

FOR rejecting a P10,000 bribe in exchange for the freedom of two suspected drug pushers, PO2 Cornelic Ramel of the SPDO Intelligence Division yesterday received a commendation from Southern Police District Office Director Senior Supt. Jose Gutierrez. Gutierrez said that by rejecting the bribe and arresting the suspected bribe giver, Ramel showed that the Philippine National Police is still an agency that observes its motto about honor, duty and service. But sources at the SPDO headquarters said that, aside from the commendation, Ramel should also be promoted to the next higher rank. They said the image of the PNP is so bad that Ramel's action "is like a beacon of light in the dark." Ramel arrested Arturo Santos, 37, of 142 M.H. Del Pilar St. in Barangay Palitaw, Pasig City on June 18 after he offered the policeman a P10,000 bribe inside the district's IID office for the freedom of Angelito and Pearly Nazario, who were arrested in a buy-bust operation last Friday by SPDO intelligence operatives led by Insp. Joey Goforth.

The couple were arrested in their house at 94 N. P. Cruz St., Barangay Ususan, Taguig. Police found on the couple 20 grams of methampethamin hydrochloride or shabu. *Nelson Flores*

JEERS

Bad employees

THREE employees of the Manila Electric Co. were arrested Tuesday for allegedly selling equipment stolen from the utility company, police said. Salvador Receles, 41, Ronaldo Portarea, 37, and Jordan Jarin, 24, all of Pandayan, Meycauayan in Bulacan were caught by security guards Warly Silverio and Jose Maria Ronquillo in the act of selling equipment they had allegedly stolen from Meralco at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday. Receles and Portarea were linemen while Jarin was a driver. The security guards were conducting a routine check of Meralco lines in Mauban Street in Barangay Masambong due to the rampant theft of electric equipment there, police said. Found on the suspects were pole clamps, machine bolts, guy wires, bare copper, and solid copper. Police are set to file theft charges against the suspects before the Quezon city prosecutor's office. *Christian Esguerra*

They're . . .

(From page A17)

on the planned demolition of the market.

But only about 10 Samapa members who are sympathetic to the Estrada family attended the meeting. The rest of Samapa chose not to attend as they wanted to know first the agenda of the meeting, according to Padilla.

Mayor Estrada, son of deposed President Joseph Estrada, received a hero's welcome from local residents and supporters of his family, when he returned to the San Juan municipal hall the other day.

The Sandiganbayan gave Estrada five days to clear his desk. The mayor vowed to sort the Agora problem within that time.

Padilla recalled that the vendors already had a dialogue with the San Juan mayor in March. But both sides failed to reach an agreement over the transfer to the basement of the new Agora mall because Estrada refused to listen to their grievances.

"We are not just being disobedient here," Padilla said. "We talked to him, but all we got from him were cutting remarks-'matitigas pala ang ulo ninyo' (you're all hardheaded). That is what he would tell us when we try to explain our side."

Padilla said Estrada's return to the municipal hall, although temporary, alarmed some of the market vendors.

"If he can order the demolition of Agora even if he's behind bars, how much more now that he's actually present at the municipal hall?" Padilla asked. "We really have a feeling he fought hard to get out of jail just to ensure our transfer to the new mall."

The market vendors refused to occupy the new market site, citing safety and design problems.

They claimed the basement of the five-story Agora mall, where they are supposed to be transferred, is prone to flooding and that it is not a viable place to do business.

They also complained the price of the stalls- about P100,000 per square meter-was too steep for a public market.

Chinese shoots self after brawl

A CHINESE youth reportedly shot himself while two other persons, including a policeman, were wounded during a gun battle that stemmed from a nightclub brawl in Sta. Cruz, Manila before dawn yesterday.

Ke Tin Yang, age unknown, single, student, native of Fujian, China and temporarily residing at 1514 Modesto Santiago St., Sampaloc, was found dead underneath a Mitsubishi Lancer GSR (ARA-101) parked on Sacatero Street in Binondo, where he reportedly hid himself while being pursued by policemen.

Injured were SPO2 Jesus Camacho, 45, of the Western Police District's police Investigation unit; and Miguel Go, 33, a factory machine operator and resident of Industrial Street, Malabon City.

Case investigator SPO1 David Tuazon of the city police's homicide section said Ke appeared to have shot himself, as his right hand was still clutching an .9mm-caliber pistol pointed to his right temple. The bullet exited the left side of the victim's head.

Investigation showed a group of Chinese men, including Ke, who came out of the Top Royal KTV Music Lounge and Health Center on 600 Tomas Mapua Street at around 2:30 a.m. had a heated argument with one another but later parted ways after being pacified.

After a few minutes, the gun-wielding and screaming Ke appeared on the street and began firing indiscriminately at his companions. SPO2 Camacho, who was at the scene waiting for a friend, fired a warning shot to try to stop Ke but found himself the suspect's target.

A gunfight erupted, during which customers of the club streamed out of the place in panic. SPO2 Camacho and Go were both hit on their left legs and were later brought to the Metropolitan General Hospital.

Jerome Aning

MMDA has new excuse for waste scheme snag

By Nelson Flores

ABALOS

THE METRO Manila Development Authority hit a snag when it began to implement the garbage segregation scheme due to changes in some local governments which created a "political vacuum" in some cities and municipalities.

MMDA chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said Metro Manila towns and cities whose mayors were voted out of office in the May 14 elections are currently suffering "some sort of political vacuum."

"There is no one to coordinate the implementation (of the garbage scheme)," Abalos said yesterday. "Mayors in these areas are busy cleaning their offices and have no time to address other matters, while barangay officials are awaiting instructions from them."

Abalos said once things have settled down and the incoming mayors have taken their place, he would sit down with the new local executives and sort out waste segregation problems in their areas.

THE MMDA chair yesterday met with the Metro Manila members of the Association of Barangay Chairmen and representatives of the Solid Waste Collectors Association of the Philippines at the MMDA main office to discuss some of the waste segregation problems encountered.

Among them, Abalos said, is the lack of information on the mechanics of segregation—how it works and when it would be implemented. He said this problem developed despite the MMDA's effort to disseminate information at the grassroots level.

He stressed the new waste management system would only work if barangay officials would fully cooperate.

Abalos said under the law, management of the garbage segregation scheme primarily rests on barangay officials, who in turn must be supported by their respective local government units.

Abalos warned local barangay officials that failure to implement the new waste management program would make them administratively liable.

"Under the law they are responsible for waste management in their respective areas," Abalos said.

Under the segregation scheme, household and commercial waste should be segregated into wet and dry (degradable and non-biodegradable) categories before they are collected by garbage collectors on certain days. Barangay officials will see to the collection schedule.

Biodegradable waste, which accounts for about 90 percent of 6,000 tons of Metro Manila's daily waste output, would be recycled or composted in MMDA plants.

Abalos said the garbage segregation scheme is the only real alternative to the setting up of huge dumpsites, like the controversial San Mateo Sanitary Landfill which was closed at the start of the year.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, June 21, 2001
11th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **2 Cor 11:1-11**
Gospel: **Mt 6:7-15**

Jesus said to his disciples, "When you pray, do not use a lot of words, as the pagans do, for they hold that the more they say, the more chance they have of being heard. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need, even before you ask him.

This, then, is how you should pray:
Our Father in heaven,
holy be your name,
your kingdom come
and your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today the kind of bread we need.
Forgive us our debts
just as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us.
Do not bring us to the test
but deliver us from the evil one.

If you forgive others their wrongs, your Father in heaven will also forgive yours. If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you either."

Commentary

The Lord's prayer is here introduced by the words of Jesus, "Do not heap up empty phrases... your Father knows what you need before you ask him." It is from this perspective that Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray. Jesus explains prayer as an event in which people confess themselves as brothers and sisters, all children of the heavenly Father in all situations of life. Prayer is a force that brings heaven and earth together in the kingdom of the Father. In the Lord's Prayer the disciples are invited to transcend their own fears and limited interests and to allow the goodness of God to lead them in a life that goes beyond human imagination.

Heavenly Father, in the confusion of life we often forget that you are always with us and always care for us. Teach us to trust in your fatherly care.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cn1.net; Websites:http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

Armida cleared

THE SANDIGANBAYAN'S fourth division yesterday cleared former censors chief Armida Siguion-Reyna of charges that violated the code of ethics.

The court said there was no conflict of interest in the fact that she owned 250 shares of Reyna Films during her term of office as chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB).

"I'm very happy about the judgement because I believe there was no conflict of interest when I was still with the board," Siguion-Reyna told the INQUIRER.

"For you to have conflict of interest, you have to establish that you're holding enough shares to elect you as officer of the company. My shares were not even enough to elect me as janitor of Reyna Films. So I was not part of the decision-making of the board."

Based on court documents, Siguion-Reyna originally owned 2,496 shares out of the 2,500 shares in the company.

But when she was appointed censors chief, she transferred the bulk of the shares to her children, leaving 250 for herself.

The case stemmed from a complaint filed by movie scribe Victor Felipe of Dara Productions who alleged that the MTRCB discriminated against his outfit's picture "Bayagra Brothers," which was supposed to be shown on the same date that a Reyna Films movie was to play.

Martin Marfil

TEACHERS TRIUMPH

Tala High principal removed

BY BLANCHE S. RIVERA

TEACHERS of the Tala High School scored a major victory when the Department of Education, Culture and Sports removed on Tuesday the school principal, whom they accused of abuse of authority and discrimination against lepers in the community.

The DECS-National Capital Region ordered the relief of Lazaro Gervacio IV from his post at the Tala High School effective Monday and facilitated his transfer to another school.

DECS-NCR director Corazon Santiago said Gervacio would be included in the list of principals to be "rotated" because he has completed the five-year term at the public school.

But Santiago clarified that Gervacio's transfer was not prompted by the controversy surrounding his administration of Tala High School, which hosts around 5,000 students and 100 teachers, most of whom are afflicted with leprosy or Hansen's disease.

"I cannot say that the principal was at fault or the teachers," Santiago told the INQUIRER in Tuesday's launching of the health information program of the DECS and Department of Health at the Legarda Elementary School in Manila.

"Both have shortcomings," she said. "It takes both the teachers and leaders to make a school."

Santiago designated Josefina dela Cruz, Math supervisor at the Tala High School, as officer-in-charge until the DECS finds a permanent replacement for Gervacio.

She, however, admitted that "it would not be easy" for the DECS to find a replacement for Gervacio because of considerations such as accessibility of the Tala High School.

The fact that Tala is the biggest leper community in the country should not be a problem, Santiago insisted, because DECS administrators would not have a choice but to accept their assignment however difficult the circumstances.

Parents and teachers of the Tala High School held a series of protests against Gervacio for allegedly "harassing" them and issuing derogatory statements against Hansenite teachers employed by the school.

The principal, on the other hand, countered that the 66 teachers who sought his ouster were merely affected by his effort to clean up the school administration. Gervacio accused some of the protesting teachers of collecting fees without basis and having relationships with students.

The DECS division in Caloocan City has created a fact-finding committee headed by assistant superintendent Flor Domingo, to look into the charges and bring back stability to the school after it was hit by controversy.

"No one is guilty yet until they are proven so," Santiago said, adding the teachers and parents have "promised to be more sensible" next time about such issues.

Malabon squatters won't leave without fee

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

AROUND 3,000 squatter families in Malabon yesterday vowed to form human barricades to prevent the government's planned demolition of their shanties tomorrow.

Mary Jane Asuncion, 45, said she and other residents were told by the Department of Social Welfare and Development that their makeshift "shanties would be demolished on Friday."

The families had been staying under three large tents made from parachute fabric in front of Paradise Village in Barangay Tonsuya after a mysterious fire gutted their shanties in a nearby squatter colony in April.

One of the fire victims, Losanta de Alagdon, 42, said residents would agree to leave the area if the government would fulfill its promise to give each family P2,000.

The amount, she said, was part of the financial aid President Macapagal-Arroyo released after she visited the fire victims.

Evelyn Moreno, a member of the DSWD Office of Social Welfare and Community Development, said the government would soon release checks worth P2,000 for each family.

The DSWD, she said, is still going over the list of beneficiaries since there were non-victims who were able to avail of the President's aid.

The Malabon government would release P500 for each family on top of the national government's financial support, Moreno added.

Fire victims camped out on a street in front of Paradise Village since the mysterious fire two months ago.

The eight-hour fire killed two persons and injured five others. Among the fatalities was Catalina Bercilla, 49, wife of Eddie Bercilla, the urban leader who has been urging the local government to provide relocation to the squatter families before their houses are demolished.

Many residents believe their shanties were deliberately burned to force them to leave even without relocation.

Since April, they have been staying under three worn-out tents beside a murky creek near Letre Road.

During the election season, they survived mostly on food donations from local candidates.

Leticia Ariega, 56, a fire victim, said politicians stopped giving them donations after the election.

Today, she said they still receive donations and even security from members of the Civilian Volunteers Against Crime.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

LABOR LAW (TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT)/CRIMINAL LAW (CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY)—Person may be charged and convicted for both illegal recruitment and *estafa*—It is well established in jurisprudence that a person may be charged and convicted for both illegal recruitment and *estafa*. The reason for this is that illegal recruitment is a *malum prohibitum*, where *estafa* is *malum in se*, meaning that the criminal intent of the accused is not necessary for conviction in the former, but is required in the latter. The elements of *estafa* under Art. 315, paragraph 2 (a) of the Revised Penal Code are: (1) that the accused has defrauded another by abuse of confidence or by deceit; and (2) that damage or prejudice capable of pecuniary estimation is caused to the offended party or third person. The trial court was correct in holding accused-appellant liable for *estafa* in the case at bench. Owing to accused-appellant's false assurances that he could provide them with work in another country, complainants parted with their money, to their damage and prejudice, since the promised employment never materialized. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Gonzaga0-Reyes, People v. Saulo, G.R. No. 125903, November 15, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

June 20, 2001

A MESSAGE OF THANKS AND COMMITMENT

Six months ago, the political crisis that beset the country also affected our Bank. This prompted our Bank to obtain a P30-billion loan assistance from the Bangko Sentral. This loan, which many initially assumed would have to be paid over a three- to five-year period, helped us during that difficult period.

Since then, our Bank has embarked on a vigorous deposit recovery program aimed at accelerating the funding to settle this loan. I am pleased to say we have now recovered more than half of the funds that left us during that crisis. And as of June 18, 2001, barely five months later, this has enabled us to prepay half of this P30-billion loan. Based on this performance, we are confident the remaining half can be settled within the remainder of this year.

This remarkable progress was made possible thanks to the loyalty, confidence, and support you, our clients, have shown during this time. We are deeply appreciative to you, our valued clients. Because of your faith, our Bank moves on with even greater confidence to embark on new programs to further improve our package of customer services and pursue our vision to make our Bank one of the dominant players in the banking industry.

Again, on behalf of the entire team of Equitable PCI Bank, we reiterate our commitment to provide professionalism, transparency, and quality customer service.

DEOGRACIAS N. VISTAN
President and CEO

Equitable PCI BANK

13th Anniversary of the COMPREH

THE struggle to own land has been a recurring even in the history of mankind. The unequal distrib tion of land and the resultant social upheavals shook, if not toppled, empires and regimes. Corre tive measures have been introduced, but always with violent resistance from those who wished preserve the status quo.

"Liberating, empowering millions of Filipinos"

In the Philippines, agrarian reform continues to be the burning issue and hope of Filipino farmers to achieve true liberation and progress.

GMA carries the torch of agrarian reform

The administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo faces the enormous challenge of pursuing vigorously what her late father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, started nearly four decades ago.

This challenge is to build "a nation where there is equitable land ownership, with empowered agrarian reform beneficiaries who are effectively managing their economic and social development for a better quality of life."

The immediate goals are to:

- Safeguard and sustain the gains of the government's agrarian reform program;
- Provide farmers and farm workers access to and control of land and productive resources in accordance with Republic Act 6657, or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL), and other relevant laws;
- Intensify program beneficiaries development in agrarian reform communities (ARCs) and other agrarian reform-covered areas to make them more economically viable and globally competitive; and,
- Revitalize the Philippine countryside through socio-economic reforms towards agro-industrialization

LGU NAGUILIAN

Program Focus

The Arroyo administration sees agrarian reform as a key to sustainable rural development and lasting peace. Efforts are underway to ensure its success.

The welfare of agrarian reform beneficiaries is the primary concern of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). The department is implementing development interventions according to the beneficiaries' needs as part of an effort to build a hedge against poverty.

Land Distribution

Foremost in the agrarian reform agenda of the Arroyo administration is to fast-track land acquisition and distribution of the remaining balance of close to 1.2 million hectares of agricultural lands. So far, 3.10 million hectares, about 70 percent of the DAR's total scope of 4.29 million hectares, have been distributed to 1.74 million beneficiaries. Around 100,000 hectares of land is targeted for distribution this year and every year thereafter.

To those imbued with optimism, this is a glass more than half-full. Malacañang, however, is aware of the difficulties in expropriating the remaining lands, which are mostly huge privately-owned plantations.

Task Force Salin-Lupa

Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza has recently formed Task Force Salin-Lupa to address the problem of beneficiaries who have been issued certificates of land ownership award (CLOAs) but are unable to till the land because of continued resistance by former landowners.

The task force will resolve the perennial problem of installing the beneficiaries to their awarded lands. Delays in installation are often the result of legal maneuvers by resisting landowners, who compel the lower courts to issue temporary restraining orders. The DAR is currently reviewing cases of uninstalled beneficiaries.

Recently, the DAR has successfully installed 961 farmer-beneficiaries in 24 landholdings in the Visayas, including 227 beneficiaries who were recently led inside the 314.63-hectare Hacienda Pula in Silay City in Negros Occidental. This feat, achieved in only three months of Secretary Braganza's stay in office, shows the strong determination of the new DAR administration to empower the beneficiaries.

"After waiting for 12 years under various administrations, these beneficiaries now have lands not only on paper, but in real terms," says Braganza.

He said the breakthrough in Hacienda Pula and other landholdings was the result of the continued dialogue with the landowners and the beneficiaries in a bid to find ways of settling their long standing disputes involving ownership of the land.

Support Services

Aware that land transfer alone does not guarantee a productive life for beneficaries, the DAR is integrating, institutionalizing and rationalizing the delivery of support services so that they can be carried out simultaneously with land transfer.

The DAR has efficiently secured funds from Official Development Assistance (ODA) to augment its meager resources. The ODA consists of grants and loans from various bilateral and multilateral sources to finance projects that would increase productivity and income in agrarian reform communities.

So far, foreign-donor countries and international financing institutions have poured in more than P32 billion to provide basic infrastructure, capability-building, cooperative development and other support services to ARCs, in the hope of transforming them into focal points of the government's efforts to revive the economy.

Task Force Bayanihan

To complement the ODA, the DAR has formed Task Force Bayanihan that will provide beneficiaries means of learning new farming methods and technical skill in marketing, among others.

Secretary Braganza has ordered the establishment of Farmers' Bayanihan Center for Rural Development (FBCRD), a one-stop center for technology transfer, planning, research and training. Beneficiaries may avail themselves of its facilities and services to gain new knowledge about farm management. Family members are also encouraged to attend livelihood (off-farm) trainings to further increase household income.

The Center is another convergence focus of all government line agencies involved in the implementation of the comprehensive agrarian reform program (CARP).

The Center does not necessarily mean that a physical structure shall be set up in different provinces. It only means that the DAR may make use of the existing facilities of State universities and colleges, with strong extension services, and other learning centers managed by civil society organizations, agri-business firms, and line government agencies.

Agrarian Justice

Before full development comes in, peace and harmony must prevail among all stakeholders. Here, speedy delivery of agrarian justice is the key.

The Department of Agrarian Reform Adjudication Board (DARAB) has resolved 182,824 cases, or 93.41 percent of 195,718 cases it received since January 1988 nationwide, leaving 12,894 cases awaiting resolution.

The high rate of cases resolved is noteworthy, considering that the DAR legal personnel are undermanned and are handicapped by low budget and salary.

Task Force Katarungan

Secretary Braganza has recently announced the DAR is tapping the services of young and idealist "barefoot" lawyers to reinforce the legal staff. These volunteer-lawyers will take the cudgel for the newly created Task Force Katarungan, which will spearhead the DAR's crusade against agrarian injustice and seek peaceful settlement to land disputes.

Braganza believes that any delay in the delivery of agrarian justice fuels social unrest. As he expects the number of cases to increase, now that the department is in its crucial stage of redistributing the most contentious coverage of CARP – the private agricultural lands and commercial farms — he sees the urgent need to enlist the support of individuals or groups of lawyers and legal institutions.

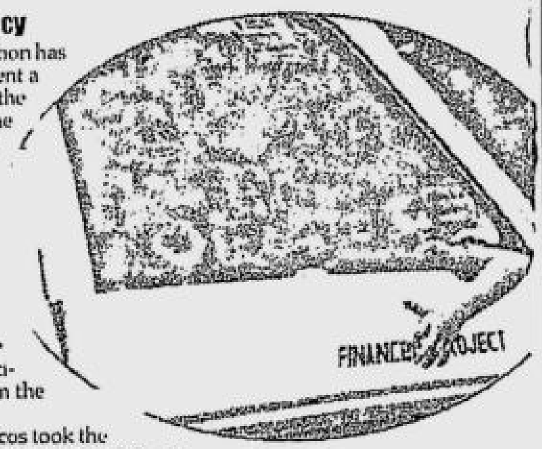
"The success of our program lies on how far can we deliver agrarian justice to our beneficiaries. Every agrarian case we resolve means a farmer or two are emancipated from land bondage, and a step towards reshaping the political and economic landscape in the countryside," he stresses.

Task Force Kapayapaan

Since the insurgency problem thrives because of inequality in land distribution and the widening gap between rich and poor, Braganza sees the vital role of agrarian reform in attaining lasting peace in the countryside. It is, thus, integral to the on-going peace negotiations between the Philippine government, the National Democratic Front, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and other rebel groups to end the more than three decades of rebellion in the country.

Braganza has created Task Force Kapayapaan to keep the GRP, the NDF and the MILF peace panels updated on the latest development about CARP. The task force also formulates strategies based on understandings reached by the negotiating panels in order to plug loopholes in the agrarian reform law and make it more responsive to the times.

Lasting Legacy



The Arroyo administration has made land tenure improvement a priority, a clear indication of the President's desire to pursue the task started by her late father. The elder Macapagal enacted Republic Act 3844, or the Agricultural Land Reform Code, on August 8, 1963. The law, Macapagal's legacy to the poor Filipino farmers, sought to replace share tenancy with a more suitable agrarian setup – the leasehold system — to emancipate the Filipino farmers from the bondage of tenancy.

Former President Marcos took the cue from RA 3844 when he promulgated Presidential Decree No. 27 on October 21, 1972. Also known as the Tenants' Emancipation Act, PD 27 launched Operation Land Transfer for the orderly and systematic transfer of tenanted rice and corn lands to tillers.

The program met little success as social unrest intesified. When President Aquino came to power, she batted for a more comprehensive program and enacted RA 6657 in June 1988. The law covered all public and private agricultural lands, regardless of tenurial arrangements and crops produced.

Despite tremendous pressure from various sectors, more particularly from defiant landowners, the government pursued the program vigorously. With more than 3.10 million hectares already distributed to some 1.74 million beneficiaries, and the support services that go with it, the program has somehow passed the test.

The ARC Approach

Former President Ramos gave RA 6657 more substance when he introduced in 1993 the agrarian reform community (ARC) concept to accelerate and sustain growth through a concerted, holistic and area-focused approach in community development. It is an over-arching framework that guides DAR and other implementing agencies in delivering interventions for program beneficiaries development.

The ARCs, which are clusters of land-reformed barangays, serve as growth points in the countryside. They showcase partnership and convergence between and among stakeholders on rural development.

As of end-December 2000, the DAR has launched 1,308 ARCs nationwide, spread over 4,456 barangays in 970 municipalities. These ARCs cover around 1 million agricultural lands cultivated by some 536,113 beneficiaries.

No less than the World Bank recognizes the value of ARCs. A study commissioned by the World Bank has reported that beneficiaries in ARCs earn higher income and enjoy greater productivity compared to non-beneficiaries.

Experts recognize that agrarian reform creates highly beneficial impact on beneficiaries and contributes to poverty reduction and tangible improvements in farmers' welfare.

As American expert William C. Thusenhusen, emeritus professor of agricultural and applied economics at the University of Wisconsin, says: "The way to break poverty is for governments to have a more active role in pursuing more vigorous programs for agrarian reform."

The Arroyo administration is doing just that. In commemorating the 13th anniversary of CARP, President Arroyo calls on all stakeholders to join hands in pursuit of sustainable development and lasting peace in the countryside.

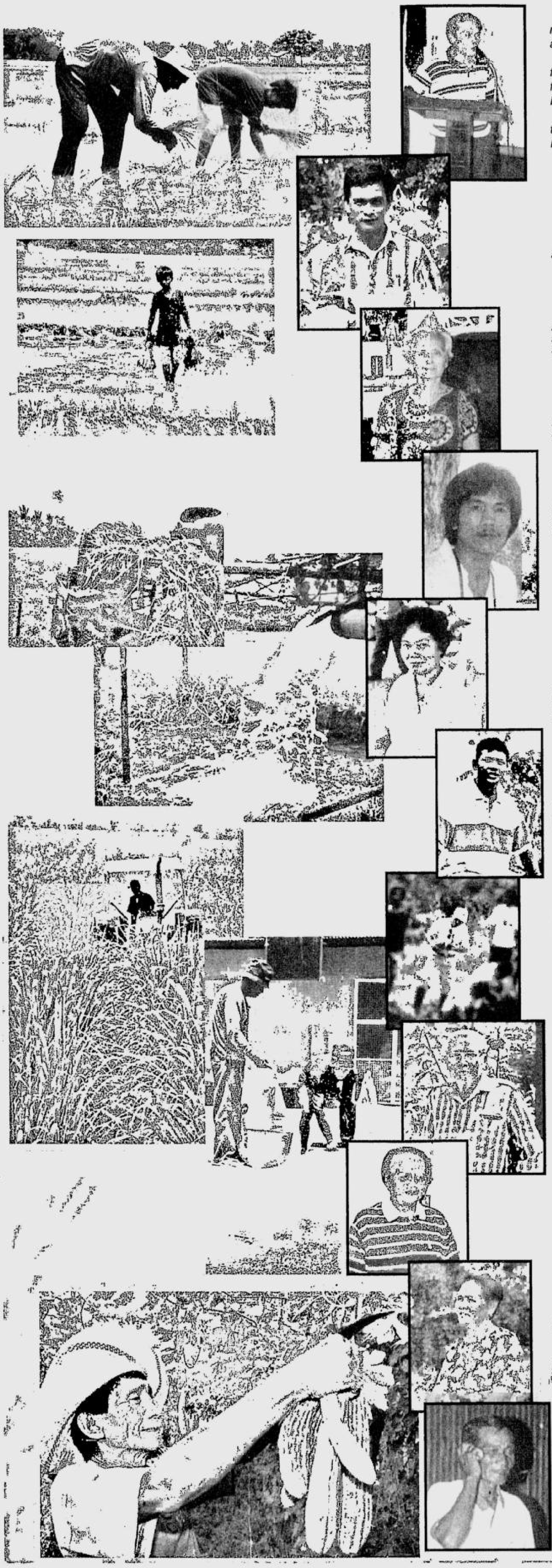
Bayan-Anihan tungo sa mapayapa t maunlad na kanayunan!

DAR

DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM

ENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM LAW

Mga tunay na damdamin



We would like to express our appreciation to the sincerity and commitment of the Arroyo administration in alleviating the plight of the poor and for making our barangay as part of its countryside thrust.

The release of P18 million pesos by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo for the construction of farm-to-market road will surely ease the burden of farmers in transporting farm produce in eight barangays in Gen. McArthur, Eastern Samar.

Thousands of residents in our locality are expected to benefit from the road project, which will pass through barangays Calutan, Canvuevas, Domrog, Pingan, Sta. Cruz, Vigan, Sta. Fe, San Isidro, and Gen. McArthur.

TERESA CORDERO
Chairman
San Isidro Multi-Purpose Cooperative
San Isidro, Gen. McArthur, Eastern Samar

Mas maunlad ang buhay ko ngayon na sarili ko na ang lupang aking sinasaka. Salamat sa Land Reform Program.

SERVANDO PARIL
Bar. Poblacion, Sta. Elena, Camarines N.

Malaki ang naibigay na tulong sa akin ng programang agraryo. Kundi sa CARP, siguro empleado lang ako. Sa pagiging magsasaka ko, higit na maginhawa ang buhay sa gawaing ito. Dahil wala akong amo. Hindi limitado ang kita. And kita dito ay depende sa diskarte at sipag.

PETER REPINOSO
Molopolo, New Sibonga ARC
Kiblawan, Davao del Sur

Dahil rin sa CARP, ako ay nagkaroon ng pagkakataon na makadalo sa iba't ibang klaseng pagsasanay na nakatulong sa pagpapataas ng aking ani, hindi lamang sa palay, kundi pati na rin sa gulay at mangga.

SOLFIRIO SANTOS
San Francisco ARC, Bulacan

Mayroon kaming iba't ibang appliances, napag-aral namin ang aming mga anak, may kanya-kanya kaming sinasakang lupa... Kami ay taus-pusong nagpapasalamat sa pamahalaan dahil sa programang CARP na nagdulot ng malaking tulong sa kabuhayan ng agrarian reform beneficiaries."

EDUARDO L. SADIGSAL
Bar. Lawa, Don Marcelino
Davao del Sur

Ngayon maayos na ang takbo ng buhay namin at malaki ang pasasalamat namin.

FERNANDO MARAVILLA
FB, Angas-Awao ARC
Sta. Josefa, Agusan del Sur

"Maliban sa lupang ipinagkaloob sa amin ng sinasabing programa ng gobyerno sa agraryo ay maraming kabutihan ng naitulong sa amin. Isa po doon ang pagbibigay sa antas ng pamumuhay ng aming pamilya, pangalawa napag-aral ko ang aking anak hanggang kolehiyo. Nakatulong din kami sa employment ng aming kapitbahay at mga kaibigan sa labas."

MARTINEZ MANAMBAY
Bar. Lawas, Don Marcelino
Davao del Sur

Sa ngayon, mayroon na kaming irrigation facilities galing din sa ating programang agraryo at mga post harvest facilities tulad ng thresher, solar dryer, trapal na ibinigay sa atin at marami ring livelihood support services galing din sa programa gaya ng duckery, goatery, dispersal ng mga baboy, dito na galing sa DAR.

LIMUEL ALVEOR
ARB, Basak, Nabunturan Valley
Davao

We, the residents of the Laguit Padilla ARC, are grateful to the government. Most of our houses have improved. Almost all our children were sent to different schools and colleges. Most of them became professionals. Our lands have become our foundation for a strong community.

HERMINIGILDO PALMA
Barangay Captain, BOD, Laguit Padilla
MPCI, Laguit Padilla ARC
Bugallon, Pangasinan

Most of us have improved our houses, sent our children to school and colleges/universities. Most of our children are now professionals and are employed. We thank the government for the development and improvement of our place.

GUMERCIENDO D. CABRIDO
BOD, Malimpin MPCI, Malimpin ARC
Dasol, Pangasinan

Bukod sa paghahayupan, naging mas makahulugan sa amin ang pagtatanim ng mga puno, at gulay at iba pang pananim pati na ang kalinisan sa aming mga bakuran. Naging masigasig din ang mga kababaihan sa pagsasanay ng iba't ibang kaalaman sa pangkabuhayan tulad ng meat processing upang madagdagan ang kita ng pamilya.

DEMETRIO MAYO
Sta. Cruz, Zambales

Thank you very much to the DAR and I hope the projects of the government will continue.

CORAZON NARVAS
Coop Treasurer, AIWA MPCIA
Aramal ARC
San Fabian, Pangasinan

With the various projects that were implemented in this ARC, the agrarian reform beneficiaries are able to uplift their living conditions and gave a new hope and a new strength to face the challenges of their lives

NELSON JOSE DE VERA
Coop. Manager, San Jose MPC
San Jose ARC
Caba, La Union

Our irrigation system has improved. We have accessible road network and farm-to-market road. We are also benefited with the post harvest facilities.

HENRY CAMPANANO
Chairman, Nagsurot ARB's Coop
Burgos, Ilocos Norte

Nagsitapos man ng kolehiyo ang aking mga anak, nakakasama ko pa rin sila, pati ang mga babae, sa pagtatanim, pag-gapas at pag-alaga ng mga baboy at pagpastol ng mga itik.

JESUS CABRERA
Balibago, Tarlac

SM CINEMA

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6 GOLD (SDDS) PEARL HARBOR
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8 (SDDS) ACCIDENTAL SPY
9 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR

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4 KASIBULAN
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3 KASIBULAN
4 LUV TEXT
5 BUHAY KAMAO

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2 ACCIDENTAL SPY
3 KASIBULAN
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5 MAGENTA
6 EVOLUTION

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3 (DTS) LUV TEXT

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2 (DTS) HEAD OVER HEELS
3 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
4 LUV TEXT

Lianas Cinema
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2 KASIBULAN
3 LUV TEXT
4 (DTS) EVOLUTION

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3 (DTS) HEAD OVER HEELS
4 BUHAY KAMAO
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Olivarez Tri-Cinema
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3 EVOLUTION

Olivarez Los Baños
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2 EVOLUTION
3 BUHAY KAMAO

Olivarez Tagaytay
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3 KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

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2 LUV TEXT
3 ANTS IN THE PANTS

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	EVOLUTION
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	DR. T & THE WOMEN
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FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
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ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
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CINEMA-3	MAGENTA
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CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SPOT
CINEMA-6	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-7	LUV TEXT
CINEMA-8	THE REPLICANT
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(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	PAY IT FORWARD
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UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
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CINEMA-2	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-4	BUHAY NA MANIKIN

'Rizal' biopic concludes tonight

FOR SEVERAL years, even decades, Filipinos lamented the quality of our movies and the dire lack of films to make us proud as a people.

Then came the mammoth project that was "Jose Rizal," the film-bio of our national hero.

The movie was initially viewed with skepticism, but later turned out to be the most important Filipino film and also the most expensive ever to be made in local motion picture history.

"Jose Rizal" proved all its detractors wrong by becoming both a critical and a commercial success. It also single-handedly restored the Filipino's faith in the local movie industry.

That was in 1998. Last week saw the TV premiere of "Jose Rizal," starring Cesar Montano in his award-winning role.

Tonight, watch the conclusion of the saga, 8:30 p.m. on GMA.

Radio contest

PRIME Music Corporation recently launched a radio contest for its newest boy-band artist simply called Toyz.

To join, tune in to Yes! FM 101.1 and Love Radio 90.7 and call the stations to answer the following questions: What is the name of the newest boy band who popularized the revival song "Young Love?" (Answer: Toyz); and What is the title of Toyz's second single from their debut album "Toyz in Love"? (Answer: "Dati Rati").

Listeners will win a cassette tape of Toyz's debut album, t-shirt, poster, postcard and VIP seat tickets to Toyz album launch on June 21, 9 p.m. at the Music Warehouse located along Quezon Blvd., Sampaloc.

"Dati Rati" is Toyz's second single, a follow-up to their highly successful debut, "Young Love," which has been revived for today's listeners.

"Toyz in Love" is produced by Prime Music Corporation and distributed by Viva Records.

To avail of Toyz cassette tapes and CDs with free VIP seat tickets (one for cassette tapes and two for CDs) for the album launch, call Toyz booking office at 533-1097 or 533-1767.

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Julianne Moore

June 21 - Thursday
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~~10:40 PM - Evolution~~

Angelina Jolie stars as LARA CROFT in TOMB RAIDER opening June 27

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Marilou Diaz-Abaya wins Asian arts and culture prize

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SOME weeks ago, we wrote about the prestigious Fukuoka Asian Arts and Culture Prize awarded annually by that Japanese City and the Yokatopia Foundation. Today, we're happy to report that Filipino film director **Marilou Daiz-Abaya** has won the coveted honor.

The award is given to people who have contributed in a special way to the development of Asian culture. Diaz-Abaya has been deemed worthy of the honor because of the excellence of her films, and their significant cultural resonances.

In past years, Diaz-Abaya's movies have been regularly featured in Fukuoka City's annual Focus on Asia Film Festival, the organizers of which are particularly fond of her and appreciative of her productions.

This regular showcase has made Fukuoka's cultural leaders aware of Diaz-Abaya's gift and special contributions to Asian film culture, so her winning the Fukuoka Asian Arts and Culture Prize comes as no surprise.

It's a great honor not just for Marilou, but also for the Philippines. She is the first woman director and one of only a few filmmakers who have won the prize (the others are Japan's revered film master, **Akira Kurosawa**, Korea's **Im Kwon-taek** and Taiwan's **Hou Hsiao Hsien**).

In addition to the great prestige that the award brings, it also carries a cash component of Y5 million. Aside from the top Arts and Culture Prize, Fukuoka also hands out an Academic Prize and other honors, but the prize that Marilou has won is the top award.

Marilou will be flying to Fukuoka this September to receive her award. A retrospective of her films will be mounted while she's there. To be showcased are "Karnal," "May Nagmamahal sa Iyo," "Ipaglaban Mo," "Milagros," "Jose Rizal," "Sa Pusod ng Dagat" and "Muro-Ami."

At the moment, Marilou is shooting one of her most important films, on the conflict in Mindanao. She expects to wind up shooting next month, so it would be great if she could show excerpts of "Mindanao" (working title) at her Fukuoka retrospective. Congratulations, Marilou!

Feedback

FROM **Pureza Ramiro Pacis** of Vintar, Ilocos Sur: "What turns me off on TV? Subliminal advertising! For instance, the beer conveyed by ants to the watering hole, replete with earthquake effect, and the shampoo promising that the hair be *'masarap hawakan—dito, dito, dito.'* And the list goes on.

"While meanings are in people, don't you think advertisements should be subject to PG warnings, too?"

'Swordfish'

"PEARL Harbor" has been doing such great business that movie people expected it to stay on top of the box-office hit list for some more weeks. However, **John Travolta**'s latest starrer, "Swordfish" had such a strong opening last week that it dislodged the war epic from the top spot.

This is welcome news for Travolta, who is still reeling from the critical and box-office disaster that was "Battlefield Earth." In fact, "Swordfish" is shaping up to be one of his most popular movies, after "Face/Off" and "The General's Daughter."

What has pushed "Swordfish" to the top? It has a number of unexpected twists that keep viewers on the edge of their seats, and people are talking about **Halle Berry**'s topless shot in the film.

It also has a particularly strong role for Travolta and costar **Hugh Jackman**, who play crack cyber terrorists bent on getting their hands on a top-secret slush fund in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Charlene is at peace with herself

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

WHEN "Keep On Dancing" invited me last Saturday to do a live, one-on-one interview with my good friend **Charlene Gonzales**, I was ecstatic but apprehensive. It was her very first interview after her wedding with **Aga Muhlach**. And with all the controversies hounding them, I didn't want to rock the boat even more.

I was torn between giving the audience what they wanted to hear and giving Charlene a break. I chose the latter.

Our one-on-one turned into a one-to-one because as a friend, I could feel what Charlene feels.

Friends kept texting me that I should have just fired away with all the intriguing questions like I usually do. But something in Charlene's eyes told me that she has learned to embrace all the questions, knowing that love is always the final answer.

For now, some questions are better left unanswered. She deserves a "maternity leave" from intrigues, as well. Come on, let's make her relish newly-wedded bliss and the joys of infanticipation.

Off-cam, Charlene and I had an intimate girl's talk. Without divulging everything, here's a glimpse of Mrs. Aga Muhlach not as the Dance Empress but as herself . . .

What's the best thing about being Mrs. Aga Muhlach?

Charlene: Funny but I don't think of him in a matinee idol sort of way, but of course I know he has millions of female fans. I can not pinpoint one thing. It's like we're on a honeymoon everyday.

What's your priority, being a wife, a mother or a TV host/dance empress?

C: My family will always come first although I still want to host "Keep On Dancing." Maybe I won't be able to dance while I'm pregnant. Once my doctors tell me to stop, I will. But after I give birth to my twins I'll definitely be back on the show. (Ace choreographer **Maribeth Bichara** told me, though, that she will create "preggy" dance steps for Charlene).

I would rather not touch on the "Amalia Fuentes" issue because Tita Nena and **Liezl** are like family to me, but is there anything you might want.to say about her?

I can not comment because I've never met her. Aga and I respect her.

Where do you get your strength now that you are bombarded with all sorts of intrigues?

C: Frankly, I don't really know the whole story because Aga and my family have been shielding me from the controversies. Aga and my family are my source of strength. I don't let the intrigues bother me for the sake of my coming twins.

Did all the crazy gossips affect your closeness with our good friend **Pops (Fernandez)** in any way?

C: *Sa atin wala naman 'yon di ba? Nilalagyan lang ng kulay ng ibang tao.* I even congratulated Pops on the show for her "Shindig" US tour. My conscience is clear. I'm at peace and I'm sure so is Pops.

(Personal: Hey Charls and Pipay, since you're neighbors now, hope we can sit under the stars again soon and talk like high school girls in the park across Pipay's. We should call Liezl and **Princess (Punzalan)**, too huh?)

On a lighter note, how's your pregnancy so far?

C: Thank God! I don't have unusual cravings. It's Aga who loves to eat now. *Siya yata ang naglilihi. Ha! ha!*

He wants to have a baby girl. I was thinking of giving birth in the States but I guess it's better here.

How did you "tame" Aga?

C: He'll always be my baby! Tame? Ha! Ha! You know him, He just seems so childlike and playful, *pero* behave *naman yon eh*. We've known each other for a long time but *talagang* you'll never know *pala* when love hits you.

Of course I've always found Aga to be gorgeous, but I never pictured myself being married to him. We were just both emotionally ready when we fell in love. The timing was perfect!

Introducing Four Seasons

SUNRISE Entertainment Co. and Millennium Exhibit present a post-Father's Day musical variety show featuring the Wise Guys and introducing an all-female pop group, Four Seasons, June 23, Saturday, 4 p.m. at Robinson's Place Ermita.

For feedback, e-mail *wateringhole2000@yahoo.com*

TOYM 2001 nominations now accepted

GMA Network Inc. is known for the awards it has received over the last 25 years. But aside from the network, the people behind GMA have received numerous recognitions as well including the TOYM (Ten Outstanding Young Men), the most prestigious award given for excellence in one's field.

Some prominent awardees include Loren Legarda, who started her TV career in "Discorama" on GMA.

Ricardo "Dong" Puno Jr. received his TOYM for pioneering the current affairs talk show genre, "Viewpoint."

Meanwhile, TOYM awardee for international finance, Manny Pangilinan, is all set to assume his role as the man who will lead GMA 7 into the 21st century.

What makes a TOYM awardee? We take a look at the accomplishments of two other TOYM awardees that represent not only GMA 7, but the Filipino people in terms of world-class achievement and excellence.

Jessica Soho

No other broadcast journalist in the Philippines comes close to the stature that GMA Network Inc.'s Jessica Soho has achieved in her 15 years of experience as a news reporter, host and producer of several award-winning news and current affairs programs and documentaries.

Soho, who in 1993 was chosen as one of Ten Outstanding Young Men, has won virtually all major awards given out to outstanding journalists by award-giving bodies here and abroad.

The highest honor she has achieved is the George Foster Peabody Award for Investigative Journalism, regarded as the Pulitzer Prize of Broadcasting and the most prestigious distinction a journalist can ever receive.

Soho's stories on "Kidneys for Sale" and "Kamao" (the plight of Filipino boxers) made her the country's first-ever Peabody winner.

Apart from the Peabody, Soho's work has received due recognition in the New York Festivals (for her coverage of the Cagayan crisis), also the Philippines' first winner in the festival. She repeated this feat this year by landing finalist honors for her documentary, "The Essence of Payatas."

In Asia, Soho has achieved similar success by winning the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union grand prize for her coverage of a breaking story in the 1994 show, "Kape at Balita."

Her documentary "Kamao" was singled out as a finalist for best documentary in the Asian TV Festival.

In the Philippines, Soho has been conferred the Rotary Club of Manila's TV Journalist of the Year for two consecutive years in 1989 and 1990, the first-ever KBP's Broadcaster of the Year (Ka Doroy Valencia Award), Cultural Center of the Philippines' Gawad Natatanging Parangal (special award) in 1989 and 1990, and the Metro Pacific Corporation Journalism Awards Political Reporter of the Year for her coverage of the "Ipil Massacre."

Several of Soho's well-produced and insightful coverages and stories have made her a distinguished reporter-producer, with stories like "Within the Walls," a documentary on prison life which was adjudged by the Catholic Mass Media Awards as best TV news magazine.

A decade and a half of hard work as a field reporter of GMA News and Public Affairs in practically all of the beats: education, police, Malacañang, justice, defense and military, paved the way for Soho's illustrious career that has, thus far, been unparalleled in her field and unequalled by any journalist in the country.

Butch Jimenez

Butch Jimenez broke into the limelight as the object of skepticism by the movie world when he was tasked to co-produce a movie on national hero Jose Rizal. After setting sail for that course, it seemed like the god of the winds blew their ship from one end to another. But in the end, "Jose Rizal" became the most successful movie of all time and stands as the benchmark of excellence in Philippine cinema.

From that point, the 38-year-old Jimenez never looked back. He has received the TOYM award for broadcast and media in 1998. The following year, he was awarded the TOYP (Ten Outstanding Young Person of the World) in Cannes, France, the international version of the TOYM with a roster of winners that included John F. Kennedy Jr.

He followed up "Jose Rizal" with another blockbuster, "Muro-Ami" and then with "Deathrow," a shocking legal exposé about minors given the death sentence.

As head of the Creative Services Division of GMA Network Inc., Jimenez won major international awards for excellence in broadcast promotions. He conceptualized plugs and campaigns that have earned a Promax silver trophy, a finalist medal at the New York TV and Film Festival, and recently, the gold award at the Fuji Titles Fair in Japan.

Last Christmas, Jimenez's creative skills were put to a test. In a desperate attempt to out-do the fabulous Christmas campaign of ABS-CBN, he conceptualized the now famous "GMA Peace Plug," where he put together political opponents like Joseph Estrada, Chavit Singson, Cory Aquino, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Mike Velarde, Cardinal Sin, etc. singing "Let There Be Peace On Earth."

Jimenez is also the executive director of Trumpets, the country's premiere musical theater group responsible for such hits as "Joseph the Dreamer," "The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe" and last year's "Little Mermaid." He also heads Playshop, the country's leading performing arts summer workshop which has moved on to train artists in Singapore and Hong Kong.

On radio, Jimenez has been part of Monster Radio, RX-93.1, two-time winner of the best station award and a consistent top-rater in the pop format.

In print, he has authored four books, published a Manila Critics award-winning book, "Ang Screenplay ng Jose Rizal" and writes for the country's top newspapers and magazines. He is also a founder of the "Philippine Forum," the brainchild of Mar Roxas which brings together the young movers and shakers of Philippine business, government, arts, civil society and the academe for a yearly conference.

Jimenez's biggest challenge to date is to make a mark in regional TV production. He has been tapped by Mediaworks Singapore, the newest English language TV station to produce their anchor program, "Paradise." The show was shot on location in the Philippines and features three top Singaporean artists, including popular MTV host, Nadya Hutagalung.

The search for the 2001 TOYM awardees is now ongoing. The award is open to all Filipinos, 40 years and below who have excelled in his or her field. For more information and details, contact your local Philippines Jaycee's chapter or Joel Pascual at 0917-8441217.

TOYM awardees from GMA Network: Butch Jimenez and Jessica Soho.

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PEARL HARBOR - P 13 11:30, 3:00, 6:30, 10:00	HEAD OVER HEELS - P 13 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:20, 8:10, 10:00	EVOLUTION - P 13 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

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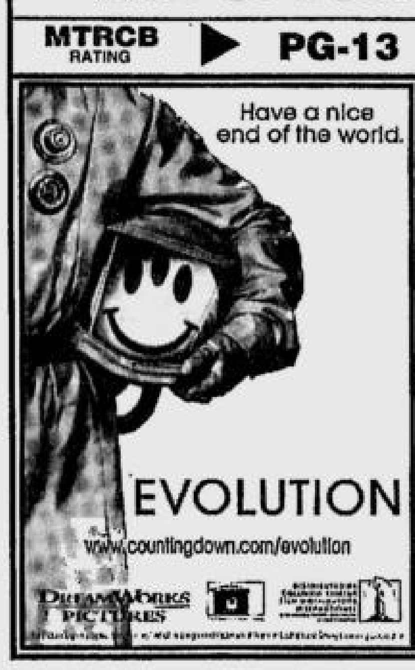

Hip, MiB-style alien comedy fun, hi-tech special fx in EVOLUTION

In the tradition of MEN IN BLACK comes another funny, hip and special-effects-packed sci-fi comedy misadventure -- Columbia Pictures' EVOLUTION.

When a meteor crashes Earth carrying alien life forms, all hell wackily breaks loose.

David Duchovny (FBI Agent Mulder in X-FILES), Orlando Jones (BEDAZZLED), Seann William Scott (AMERICAN PIE) and two-time Oscar® nominee Julianne Moore (HANNIBAL) star as the only people standing between the aliens and world domination.

A team of visual effects wizards, led by Phil Tippett, worked with director Ivan Reitman (GHOSTBUSTERS) to design an ever-evolving assortment of alien creatures, which were then digitally rendered. Tippett created the dinosaurs in JURASSIC PARK and the giant alien insects in STARSHIP TROOPERS.

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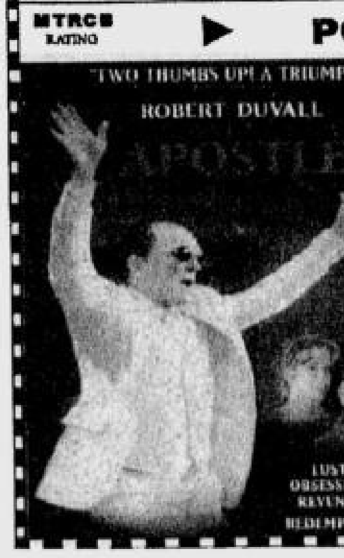

"TWO THUMBS UP! A TRIUMPH!"
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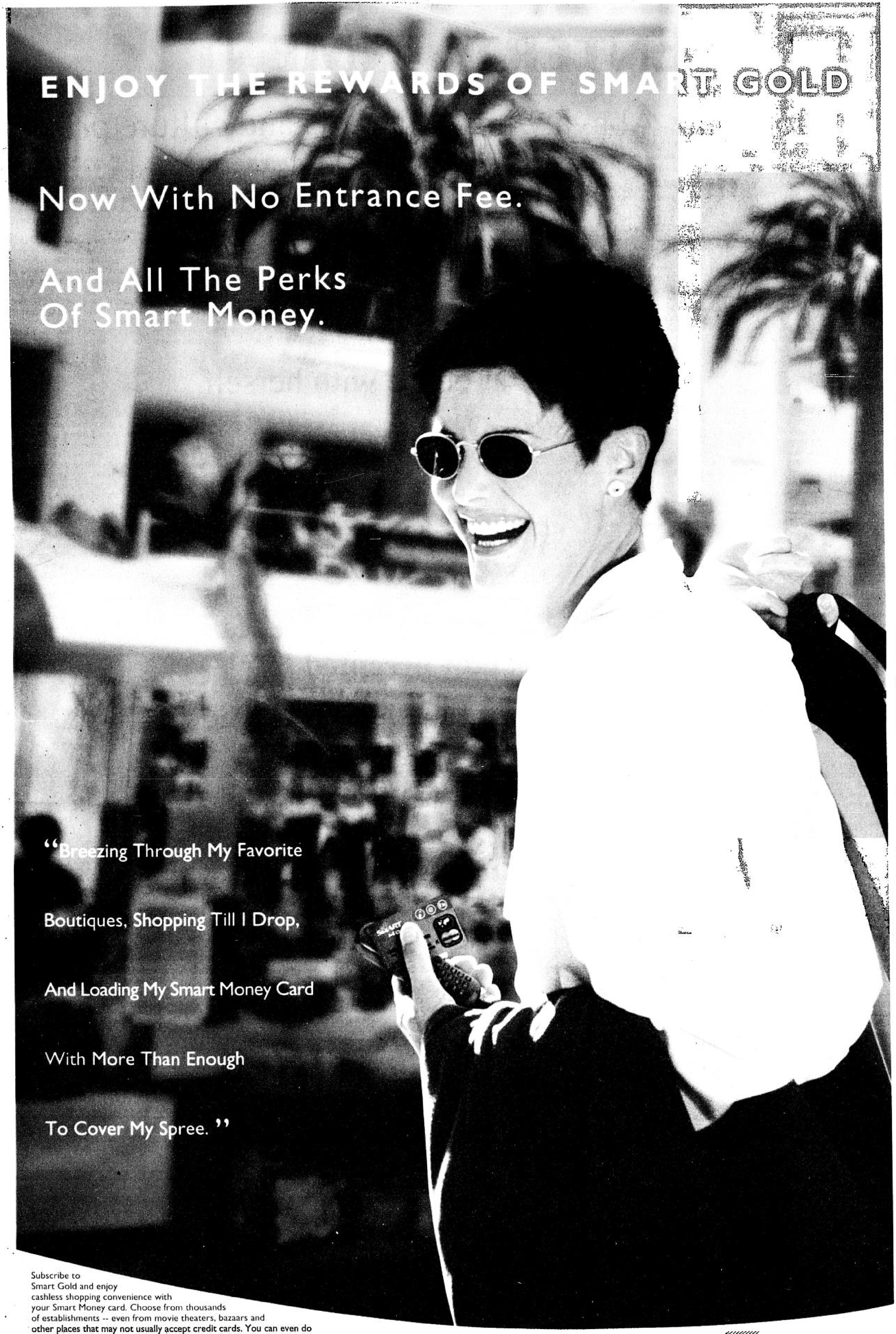
APOSTLE
LUST. OBSESSION. REVENGE... REDEMPTION

PHILIPPINE PREMIERE
ROBERT DUVALL
THE APOSTLE

After being squeezed out of his church by his ex-wife, a Texas fundamentalist preacher's alcohol-fueled rage sends him off the deep end. After beating her new beau into a coma, he flees to Louisiana and seizes the chance to reinvent himself as a devout "Apostle," founding a new church and captivating the citizenry while keeping his sins buried. Duvall, who also wrote and produced, is riveting in the title role.

ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATION
Best Actor - Robert Duvall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THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2001
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B1
BUSINESS
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RP seen at risk of ratings downgrade

By Clarissa S. Batino

AMERICAN rating firm Standard and Poor's warned yesterday that the Philippines was at risk of a credit-rating downgrade because of a shaky fiscal sector and rising government debt.

The company affirmed the country's BB-plus long-term foreign currency sovereign credit rating, which is just below investment grade, and said "the outlook on the long-term ratings remains negative."

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday voiced dismay over S&P's verdict. "I believe they have not given us enough credit for our successes in the last four months."

Camacho noted that only the Macapagal administration had the political will to finally pass the power bill, which failed to move in Congress since the time of former President Ramos.

The power bill, he stressed, was also one—if not the most important—legislative reform that foreign investors had been asking for. The finance chief also pointed out that the budget deficit in the first four months of the year was kept at a modest P28 billion, or P10 billion lower than the target.

He said P10 billion in savings from expenditures as well as earnings of the Bureau of Customs, Treasury, and other non-tax offices have compensated for the shortfall of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

S&P said the government's "creditworthiness could decline if the government fails to stabilize and reverse its increasing debt burden," which now exceeds 80 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) compared to below 70 percent of GDP in 1997, it said in a statement.

"If fiscal reforms are not instituted, the country's general government debt could reach 85 percent of GDP this year, compared with a median level of 50 percent for BB-rated sovereigns."

Standard and Poor's said a downturn in export markets would also constrain growth prospects this year. "Failure to adhere to a credible fiscal strategy could place additional pressure on the currency."

"With more than half the government's debt denominated in foreign currencies, a further depreciation of the Philippine peso would raise debt servicing and worsen fiscal flexibility. This, in turn, could weaken the government's credit standing," it said.

Government officials said the peso was merely following the trend of regional currencies against the dollar, but said it was accentuated by a hostage crisis involving Abu Sayyaf Muslim guerrillas in the south.

Standard and Poor's said the deterioration of the country's public finances over the past few years had brought the government's fiscal parameters closer to those of lower-rated countries.

The popular revolt that ousted President Estrada and put Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in his place in January "ended a period of policy drift caused by previously poor political leadership," it said.

Nevertheless, "the sovereign's creditworthiness could decline if the government fails to stabilize and reverse its increasing debt burden," it said.

The Macapagal administration was likely to consume nearly a third of its revenue this year on interest payments, double the level of five years ago, it added. *With a report from AFP*

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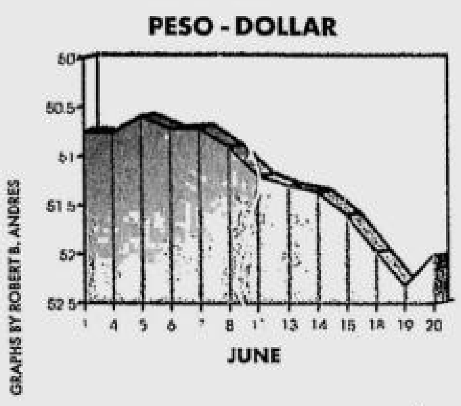


Peso-Dollar Rate

P52.01 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 20, 2001

¥ 122.76 = $1

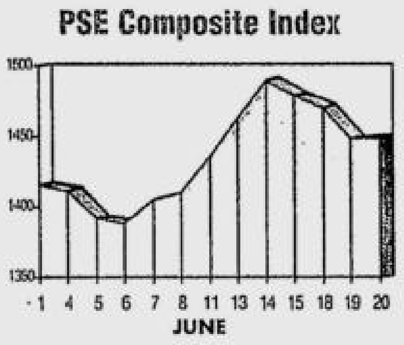
The US dollar was trading at 122.76 as of 5 p.m., June 20, 2001

GOLD:$272.80/273.30

per ounce Hong Kong, June 20, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Shares rise slightly



(See stock market report on Page B6)

SHARE prices rose about 0.1 percent yesterday as the peso recovered and investors picked up bargains, brokers said.

"The peso was under attack so there was a little bit of profit-taking but the support should be holding firm. I think the market will not see a run-up until something more substantial comes out on the political front," Harry Liu of Summit Securities said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 0.72 point to 1,449.45.

Volumes rose to 1.4 billion shares but value fell to P415 million compared to 739 million shares worth P473 million traded on Tuesday.

The peso strengthened to an average of 51.850 to the dollar in morning trade, after falling to a five-month closing low of 52.32 on Tuesday.

Brokers said stock market turnover remained sluggish and the upside was limited as investors monitored the peso and the hostage crisis in the south.

Abu Sayyaf Muslim rebels hold more than two dozen captives on the southern island of Basilan. The military have said they now believe one of three US hostages is dead, a week after the gunmen claimed to have beheaded him.

AFP

RP-Japan talk on swap deal in final stages

JAPAN and the Philippines are in the final stages of talks on sealing a currency swap deal as part of an Asia-wide currency safety net designed to fend off future financial crises, a Japanese official said in Tokyo yesterday.

The Finance Ministry official said the two sides could agree on a bilateral swap plan as early as next month, since no major obstacles remain.

"We can say our talks are drawing to an end," he told Reuters, adding that Japanese officials visited the Philippines last week to discuss the plan and nail down details.

He declined to comment on the size of the possible swap facility.

In the Philippines, unlike other Asian nations, the central bank, rather than the finance ministry, has jurisdiction over international reserves. Japanese officials have said extra technical issues had to be resolved due to that difference. But they have said Manila has been keen to set up the swap scheme with

RP-JAPAN/ B6

Peso rallies to 52.02 to $1

A COMBINATION of profit-taking and dollar inflow from remittances and export earnings yesterday enabled the peso to recover to 52.02 to $1.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the pressure on the peso eased after overseas workers' remittance and export receipts flowed into the system and corrected a dollar supply problem experienced by the market during the last few days.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the peso's depreciation was a bit overdone so the local currency started adjusting to its true value from 52.32 to $1 last Tuesday.

"The P52 to $1 was already (on the high side) and what we hope now is for the peace and order situation to improve," he said.

Traders said the peso movement today would depend on the direction of regional currencies as well as developments on the local front.

While traders mostly agreed that the Bangko Sentral had nothing to do with yesterday's $233.75 million worth of transactions, they said central bank officials still called on bank presidents to help ease the buying pressure and sell some dollars.

Chase Manhattan heeded the central bank's call and sold anywhere from $5 million to $10 million.

While Chase Manhattan was usually a conduit bank for the Bangko Sentral's open market operations, Buenaventura stressed that the dollars the foreign bank sold were not from the central bank's vaults.

From an opening of 52.26 to $1, the peso slid to a low of P52.33 before profit-taking ensued and brought it down to as low as 51.85 by mid-day.

Toward the close, the peso moved down anew past 52 to $1 as market players tried to hedge and position for today's uncertain trading direction.

"The peso could still go back to the 52.30-to-$1 level if the Abu Sayyaf situation worsens or if regional currencies also weaken," a trader from a mid-sized local bank said.

Buenaventura also pointed to a growing trade deficit as one of the factors hounding the local currency. The government has released its recent external data and in April alone, the trade deficit reached $447 million.

"The trade deficit is putting pressure on the peso because we are seeing a slowdown in the inflow of funds," the central bank chief explained.

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Sighs of the times

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

SO the peso has been depreciating heavily again lately. Then I suggest, more than ever, now is the time for everybody to buy dollars. I am not saying this only because bigtime dollar speculators who can make a killing gave me a sports rocketship on Father's Day.

My other reason is, well, buying dollars now that the peso is running amuck again is the most logical thing to do whenever the peso runs amuck. You make easy money in no time. Don't you see the potential? It's going to be a riot! Figuratively only, Nani!

If everybody goes for a mad scramble for dollars at the same time, setting off the forex market to a massive hernia, the peso certainly depreciates further and faster than if everybody just prays over the Cabinet.

Therefore, I dare say that everybody should act decively for once, so everybody can earn a little extra money quickly. And I know what you are thinking. You are thinking, but where do I get that kind of money, you moronic insect!

***

NOW that's not the way to treat somebody who, although he is only the second most good looking guy in the world, is trying hard to teach you how to make a few quick pesos.

You may think I fail to consider that only those who have the money, such as big companies and even bigger banks, can actually make money from forex speculation.

Maybe I also fail to consider that you, the poor wage earner out there, doesn't even have enough money for a used condom.

So how do you buy dollars and make money quickly? All right, so you have a valid point. Okay, you are correct, and I am a moronic insect. But I say to you, nobody is perfect. At least I am something. What are you? You can't even have safe sex.

***

HERE we are, signs of the times already tell us that the forex market is getting quite panicky, sending fear among our economic managers that the peso depreciation might push up prices of basic imports, such as jewelry and Mercedes Benzes.

Yet you complain that the same depreciation can send up the prices of imported luxury goods like rice and sardines to the stratosphere. We still import rice, although 70 percent of our population is in farming! Such are the sighs of our times!

But you are lucky indeed that we import rice. If we don't, just imagine how high its prices are going to be. It's our good fortune that the price of rice in our country is only the equivalent of 45 cents per kilo. In Vietnam and Thailand, it's a prohibitive 21 cents.

***

MAYBE you may think that only you have money problems. These times call for sacrifice from everybody. If you can't make money out of forex speculation, and you suffer from inflation, I tell you now and I won't tell you again: Tough!

Because calling me moronic insect is not the way any decent human being repays good intentions. Maybe only those who have lots of money can speculate on the exchange rate and make a killing. So? Send me to jail in a government hospital!

But my conscience is not bothered if I say that they are only doing so because they want to give you the chance to earn a little extra. You can take it or you can leave it! And you ask me where you can get that kind of money? *Kapal*!

Why can't you just be thankful for speculators? It's like you are jobless, and you have a wife and kids to feed *galunggong* with, and so you ask me for work. I give you work, and instead of just being grateful, you want to get paid.

***

DON'T even think that forex speculation is easy. Speculating in the forex market is a hard job, but somebody has to do it. Listen up: If they don't do it, the boss does it to their behind. They buy dollars now to cover their fat a. . .s!

Mostly tasked to do such hard jobs are the treasury departments of the banks. They are speculating for their corporate clients. Usually, they don't use their own money or the money of their clients. They use the money of depositors.

So don't be selfish, you ordinary wage earner, and try to understand that the dollar speculators are speculating again only because they are nervous. They fear that the peso will depreciate because of the recent spate of kidnap-for-ransom deeds of the Abu Sayyaf.

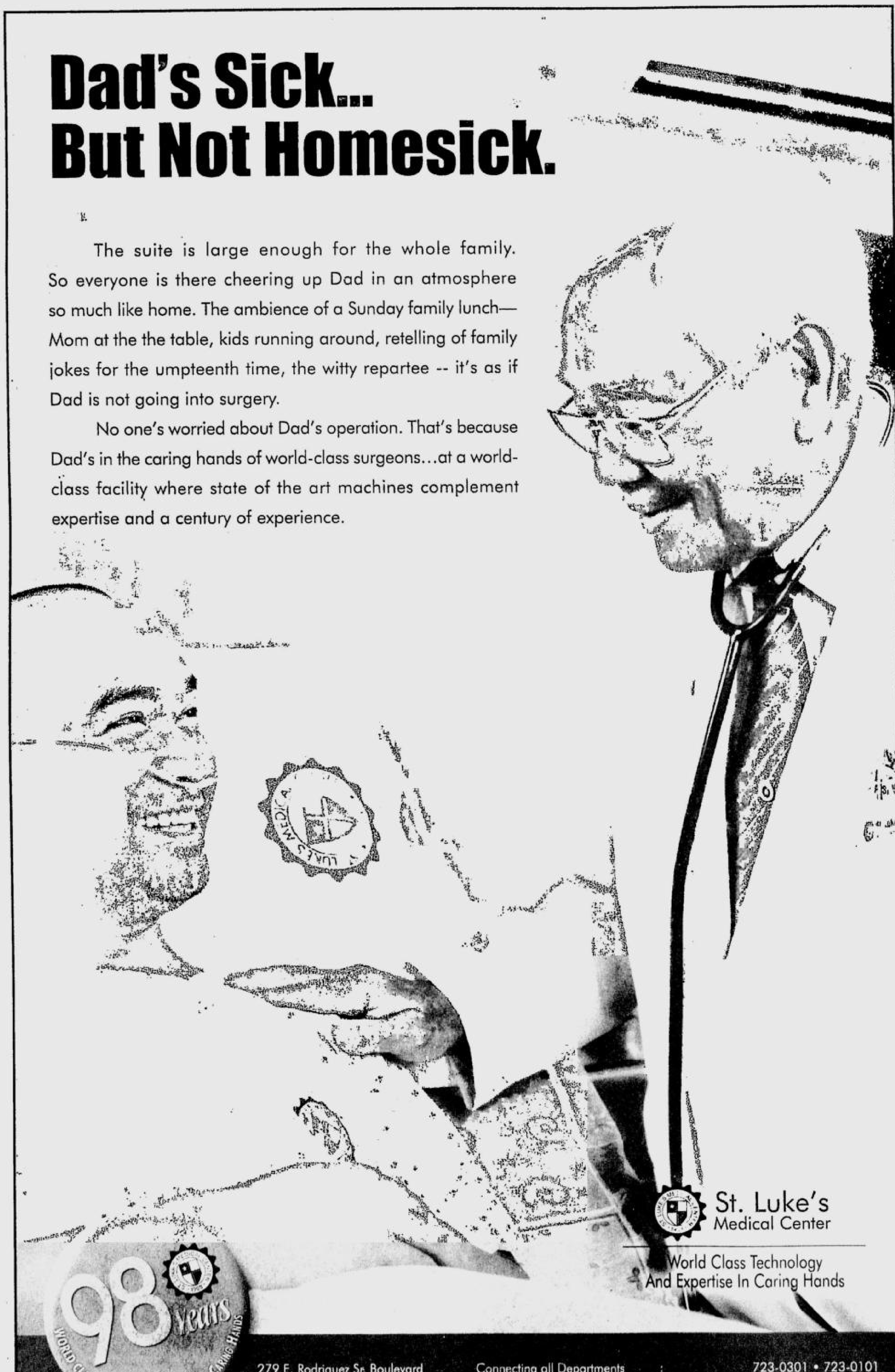
***

BUT what in heaven's name does the Abu Sayyaf have to do with the price of eggs in Slovenia? Or even in Tasmania, for that matter? The Abu Sayyaf doesn't even trade in the forex market, forgodsakes! Does the Abu Sayyaf run the banking system now?

They fear the Abu Sayyaf may be losing its touch, which is bad for the peso rate. Today the Abu Sayyaf even accepts pesos. This means less dollar inflow. How forex speculators miss the days when the Abu Sayyaf would set the ransom only in dollars!

Dollar speculation is only business; it's nothing nothing personal. Of course I don't expect you to understand the very complicated concept of A-covering as a business tool.

Rest assured that such a concept only hastens the peso depreciation. And the speculators congratulate each other for being right on the money about foreseeing the depreciation, which they themselves caused. Very complicated!



Dad's Sick... But Not Homesick.

The suite is large enough for the whole family. So everyone is there cheering up Dad in an atmosphere so much like home. The ambience of a Sunday family lunch—Mom at the the table, kids running around, retelling of family jokes for the umpteenth time, the witty repartee -- it's as if Dad is not going into surgery.

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Mitsubishi concludes $6-M Aico trade deal

MITSUBISHI Motors Corp. of Japan is undertaking a $6-million, two-way trade of auto parts between its Philippine and Indonesian subsidiaries at preferred duties under the Asean Industrial Cooperation agreement.

Mitsubishi has already obtained approval from the Philippines Tariff and Related Matters, which has agreed to grant zero- to 5-percent duties on the auto parts.

This will be Mitsubishi's second Aico project after its Thailand-Philippines project a few years ago.

Under the proposed parts exchange, Mitsubishi, through its Indonesian subsidiary, PT Krama Yudha Tiga Berlian Motors, would ship parts and components for L300, L200 and Adventure vehicles from Indonesia to the Philippines.

In return, the Philippines, through Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp., would ship original equipment manufacturing parts for Kuda, D&G and L300 vehicles to Indonesia.

The Philippine subsidiary will export $3.15 million worth of auto parts while Indonesia will generate $3 million.

The TRM has likewise approved the Aico project of Laguna Autoparts Manufacturing Corp. and PT Lippo Melco Autoparts involving $100,000 worth of auto parts and components.

Laguna Autoparts would bring in $50,000 worth of starter motors from Lippo while the latter would ship $50,000 worth of starter motors and alternators to the Philippines.

Aico is a precursor to the Asean Free Trade Area, which will bring down duties on most goods traded in the region to zero and 5 percent in 2003. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

DTI moves to prevent milk, flour price hike

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is moving swiftly to avert an imminent increase in milk and flour prices by using moral suasion to prod manufacturers of these to defer any planned adjustments.

Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. said the DTI would meet with Alaska Manufacturing Corp. and Nestlé Philippines Inc. today to look into their price dynamics and inventory levels.

The trade department is expected to review Alaska's and Nestlé's cost production structure to determine the weak peso's impact on their products' retail prices and whether these companies can still offset foreign exchange cost increments with potential savings from other cost factors.

Cristobal said the DTI would also want to look into Alaska's and Nestlé's current inventory levels to determine when the local currency's depreciation would start having an impact on their production.

He said while milk solids, the main input for powdered and liquid milk, had increased by 46 percent from $1,500 per ton in December to $2,200 this month, Alaska and Nestlé had increased their prices by only 16 percent during the period—by 8 percent in February and another 8 percent in April.

The trade department is also expected to meet with leading flour millers in the country to determine the impact of a weak peso on their production.

Wheat, the main input for flour, surged 13 percent from $148 per ton in December last year to $170 this month. Wheat accounts for 90 percent of the cost of making flour. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Boulevard sells Boni Land stake

BOULEVARD Holdings Inc. has sold its 1.12-percent stake in Bonifacio Land Corp. to the Metro Pacific group for P282 million.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Boulevard Holdings said it would use proceeds from the sale of its 613,502 shares in Bonifacio Land to wipe out the debts of its equipment-leasing subsidiary, Askar Ltd.

It said it would also use the money to pay debts it owed Metro Pacific Corp.

The Panlilio family of Puerto Azul Land Inc. owns Boulevard Holdings.

Boulevard Holdings is currently cleaning up its books in view of its strategy to focus on its Internet and technology-related businesses.

In its disclosure, Boulevard Holdings said it sold its stake in Bonifacio Land to First E-Bank Corp., formerly PDCP Bank, a member of the Metro Pacific group and a creditor of Askar. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Moody's cites benefits from power reform law

MOODY'S Investors Service yesterday said in a statement that the passage of the power bill alone would not prompt a change in its negative outlook rating on the country.

It said that the bill, together with other actions undertaken by the Macapagal administration, "would determine whether ground lost under the Estrada administration can be regained and whether the Philippines can adequately cope with a more adverse external environment."

In the same statement, Moody's Investors Service, however, said passage of the Omnibus Power Bill on June 8 should benefit the government's fiscal performance, the power sector and the economy over time.

However, improvements arising from this law must be put into the broader perspective of the government's ongoing fiscal challenges.

In addition, Moody's noted that there were some inherent uncertainties in the transition process, as detailed implementation rules and stranded cost determination and recovery are still being worked out.

Moody's believed that the debt ratings of the state-owned electricity generation and transmission company, National Power Corp., would continue to be linked to that of the sovereign.

The outcome of reviews by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) of Independent Power Producers' (IPPs) power purchase contracts will determine the future financial integrity of the IPPs, it said.

It said the power reform law should play a role in stabilizing the Philippines' fiscal situation over the long term and may also ensure that the economy will not again suffer from debilitating power supply shortages.

"The problem now is that the deterioration in overall economic conditions is much worse than when the bill was initially drawn up, owing to both domestic and external factors," it says.

GDP growth has decelerated and is not likely to recover to the mid-1990s trend.

The national government's budget has shifted from a position of surplus in 1997 to a deficit expected to reach about 4 percent of GDP this year.

The privatization and restructuring of Napocor will do little to support the national government budget in the near term.

Improved administrative revenue collection, for example, would provide a bigger boost to the budget in the near term.

Moreover, initial reports suggest that Napocor's large net liability position means that the national government will not likely to benefit from privatization proceeds.

The passage of the bill probably signals that the Macapagal administration has the ability to advance difficult reforms that frustrated even the Ramos administration.

Moody's downgraded its outlook on the country from stable to negative in October last year amid the political turmoil that booted former President Estrada out of Malacañang.

The agency's "Ba1" rating for foreign currency bonds and notes issued and guaranteed by the country means that the country is not favorable for investments. *Reuters with a report from Ronnel W. Domingo*

Smart signs ₱1-B loan deal

SMART Communications Inc. signed last week a P1-billion syndicated term loan facility arranged by Citicorp Capital Philippines Inc. under the Wholesale Lending Program of the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JIBC).

The P1-billion loan represents the peso component of a multi-tranche facility amounting to $215 million, inclusive of a $195 million worth of foreign loans signed early this month, earmarked for phase 5 of Smart's GSM network expansion.

Participants in the loan syndication are Citibank NA, the DBP Retail Lending Group, SMBC Metro/Metro Bank, Fuji Bank and Asia United Bank.

The agreement is one of the biggest facilities granted this year by the Program Lending Sector of the DBP.

When taken together with the $195 million worth of loans, this facility is the largest fund-raising activity ever undertaken by Smart.

The success of the fund-raising exercise is a demonstration of strong support and solid confidence in Smart by the creditors, particularly the institutions lending to the company for the first time, said Peter B. Eliot, relationship management head of Citibank.

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Cement makers seek higher tariff shield

LUGAIT, Misamis Oriental—Alsons Cement Corp. and other cement manufacturing companies in the country have sought the protection of the government, under the Safeguard Measure Act, against dumping activities of its foreign competitors.

The local cement industry was the first sector to seek government protection under the anti-dumping law that was passed by Congress last year.

Tom Clough, Alsons' outgoing chief operating officer, said Alsons had asked the Department of Trade and Industry to raise the tariff on cement from Indonesia and Taiwan to as much as 50 percent from the current level of 10 percent.

"It (dumping) is getting worse every year," Clough said.

He said cement imports from Taiwan and Indonesia rose from 180,000 metric tons in 1998 to 1.5 million tons by end-2000.

Shipped through the ports of Davao, Cagayan de Oro and Iloilo, Clough said Indonesian and Taiwan cement are being sold at $31 to $45 per ton. In peso terms, imported cement is priced at P21 per bag lower than locally produced cement. Clough claimed Taiwanese and Indonesian cement makers were out to destroy the local cement industry.

"This is a classic example of dumping. Flood the market with cheap products to kill the local industry," he said.

Clough said local cement manufacturers hoped that the DTI would raise the tariff on imported cement from 10 to 50 percent.

Industry records show that at least five local cement companies have shut down operations due to unfair competition posed by imported cement dumping compounded by soft domestic demand.

Clough said the remaining 20 cement firms in the country were operating at less than 50 percent of their capacity.

The Iligan Bay Business Chamber is inviting Trade Secretary Mar Roxas to visit their city and hear the complaints of Alsons and other cement makers.

Roy Trinidad of the Iligan business chamber expressed fear that Alsons and other local cement manufacturers might be forced to close shop if the government would not grant the industry's petition for higher tariff shield. *Froilan Gallardo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

AMA integrates e-learning resource library

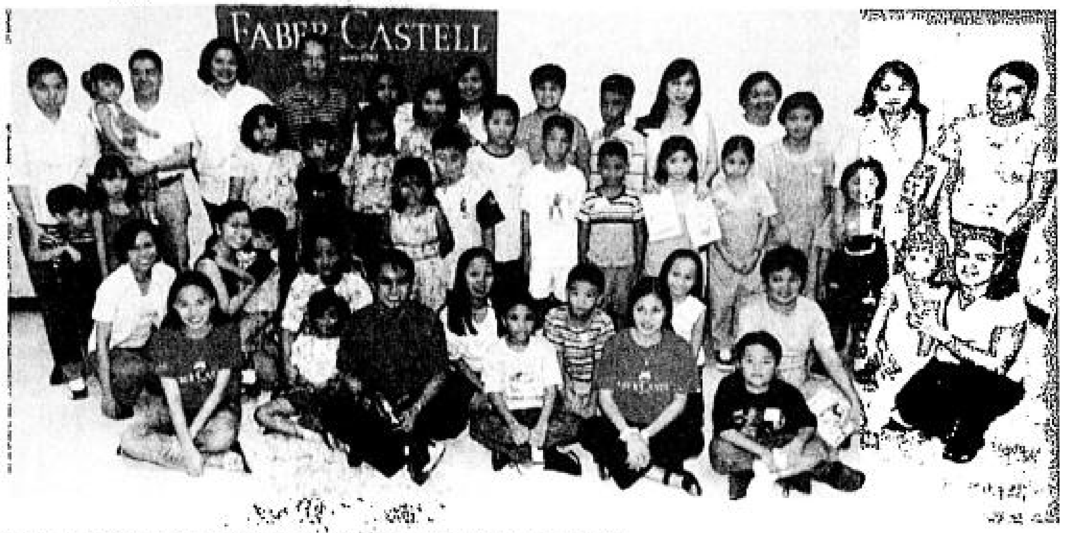
IN COLLABORATION with SmartForce, AMA Education System (Amaes) integrates in its computer courses the SmartForce e-learning resource library, giving students the opportunity to learn up-to-date computer information from SmartForce international partner companies Cisco, IBM, Intel, Lotus, Microsoft and Oracle. SmartForce is one of Amaes' international partners providing e-learning solutions for the company

For a three-unit computer subject, one unit is devoted for the SmartForce e-learning resource library, which translates to once-a-week training in the SmartForce laboratory where students get the chance to access information from 1,500 titles. Each topic provides a ready course outline, content explanation and video clips. A series of questions are provided at the end of each presentation to test if the students absorbed the subject.

The program ensures libraries of vendor-authorized, certification level courseware, covering a diverse group of networking database, Internet and end-user application products and technologies, including the following:

Cisco (IOS and career certification); IBM Suites of Windows NT; Intel Certification Program; Informix Database Programming and Online Dynamic Server; Java Programming; Lotus; Netscape; Novell Intranetware; Oracle; SAP R/3 3.0: Business Processes, Basis, Project Team; Rational-Object Oriented Analysis and Design; Tibco TIB/Rendezvous; Sybase PowerBuilder and Project Management.

SmartForce e-learning resource laboratory is made possible through the AMA Global Education Services under vice president Arnel Hibo and Bernie Ivans Salay, SAVP for research and development with the purpose of enhancing the AMA computer education through global partnership.



FABER CASTELL WORKSHOP AT INQUIRER

Faber Castell, a globally known company established in 1761 and a maker of high-quality art materials, sponsored the first Children Art Workshop@PDI held last May. 54 children of PDI employees, four to 12 years old, participated in the activity. Following this workshop was an on-the-spot painting contest at the Inquirer office. Faber Castell has been conducting free art workshops in different schools, malls, art studios, museums and galleries for the past two years.

Feast day of the Sacred Heart

THE SILVER Jubilee of the Feast of the Sacred Heart at His Shrine in San Antonio Village, Makati, will be celebrated June 13-24. A grand procession along the business district of Makati will be held on Friday, June 22, at 1:30 p.m., the feast day of the Sacred Heart. Expected to attend the procession are the different lay organizations, the parishes in Makati, students and office workers.

His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, D.D. will preside over the noon mass on June 22 while Bishop Jesse E. Mercado, D.D. will be the celebrant at the 6 p.m. mass. Mass weddings and baptisms will be held Saturday, June 23 at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. respectively with Rev. Fr. Rufino Yabut, vice rector of the Shrine, presiding. Confirmation rites will be held on Sunday, June 24 at 1 p.m. with Bishop Crisostomo A. Yalung, Shrine rector, presiding. The 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. masses for June 24 will also be presided by Bishop Yalung.

INTEX JOINS COMMASIA 2001

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo graced the opening of Intex Telecom's booth at CommAsia 2001 May 24. Intex is a provider of telecommunications and data communication systems solutions to domestic and international carriers. Currently, Intex is also into installation, commissioning and integration of cellular base stations. CommAsia 2001 as a communications event featuring over 100 exhibitors from the telecommunications, broadcast, electronics, information technology and e-commerce industries. The three-day exhibit was a joint project of leading trade show organizer, IIR Exhibitions Philippines Inc. and the Philippine Electronics and Telecommunications (Petef). Also shown is US Charge d'Affaires Michael Malinowski and Edgardo L. Limon.

Make 'vibra-mode' a habit

DON'T you just get annoyed when some cellular phone users still do not switch their phones to silent or vibrate mode when they are in public places such as movie houses? This has become a real nuisance not just here in the country but in Hong Kong and other countries where cellular phones have become ubiquitous.

Unfortunately, not all cellular phone brands provide the convenience of one-touch vibrate function.

Fortunately, there is now a cell phone that has one-touch Vibra-Mode. The Panasonic GD92 has a one-touch vibrate function that, when pressed, also automatically turns the phone in silent mode. GD92 users don't even have to really think about the whole process. Many GD92 users have confessed that turning their phones into vibra-mode before entering public venues is a habit that is easy to develop.

The GD92 is also lightweight. At 77 grams it can almost any pocket or ladies' handbag.

It also boasts of other features such as mobile e-mail, Dictaphone, recordable ringer, T9 predictive text input, six-line display, hands-free function, and 4-color back lights. It has a maximum talk time of 3 hours and 30 minutes and a maximum standby time of 160 hours.

Wireless opens Greenbelt store

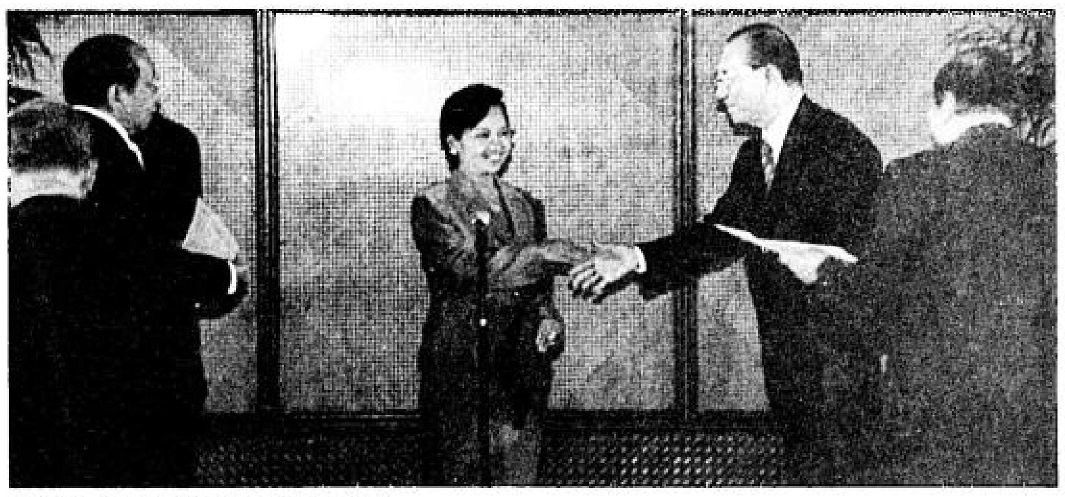
WIRELESS recently opened its outlet at the third level of the Greenbelt Mall.

Wireless is a customer-friendly retailer of wireless communications devices and office automation products such as cellular phones, corded and cordless phones, key telephone systems, fax machines, panaboards and LCD projectors. Their handset models are Panasonic, Nokia, Motorola, Ericsson and Siemens.

Unlike other retailers, Wireless positions itself as "the cellfone specialists." "Our personnel are trained to be more than just sales persons. They are actually consultants who can provide customers with proper information about the products that they are buying," Zina Fronda, manager of Wireless, said.

She said this is important since phones are now more complicated, having advanced features such as WAP and multiple frequency capabilities. Eventually, Wireless shops will also carry other communication devices and office automation products like personal digital assistants and portable fax machines.

Wireless stores can also be found in SM branches in Cebu, Bacoor, Southmall, Centerpoint and SM Megamall.



GMA AT CRES INDUCTION

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo congratulates Dr. James G. Dy, president of CRES, during its induction of officers recently in Malacañang. The CRES was organized to promote the objectives of charitable, religious, educational and social welfare organizations in the Philippines.

RIZAL MONUMENT UNVEILED

The descendants of General Paciano Rizal, the local government of Los Baños, Laguna, and the National Historical Institute (NHI) recently honored Paciano Rizal, elder brother of national hero Dr. Jose Rizal on Paciano's 150th birthday. The monument is situated at Paciano's retirement home in Los Baños, where he died in April 13, 1930. Shown above (from left) are His Grace, Bishop Camilo Gregorio, D.D.; His Grace Msgr. Nico Bautista; Jose Rizal Lopez, descendant of Paciano Rizal; NHI chair and executive director, Dr. Pablo Trillana III; Edmundo Lopez, Eugenia-Villaruz and Francisco Lopez, all descendants of Paciano Rizal.

ARCHITECT OUTSTANDING THOMASIAN

A Total (The Outstanding Thomasian Alumni) awardee, architect Jorge Y. Ramos, president of JYR and Partners, received the most prestigious award given by the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas for being an outstanding Thomasian in the field of architecture. Rev. Fr. Rector Magnificus Tamerlane Lana, O.P. conferred the gold medal. Jorge is a member of the Philippine Architectural Organizations and the American Institute of Architects and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, as well as the University of Santo Tomas. From left are UST Dean of Architecture Luis Ferrer; Rev. Fr. Rector Tamerlane Lana, O.P.; President of UST Alumni Association lawyer Salvador Lao and Ramos.

EARN A FOREIGN COLLEGE DEGREE

Parents interested in discovering the British educational system and have their kids earn foreign diplomas from various reputable state universities in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada can inquire about the curriculum offered by Thames International Business School. JJ Perez (seated) has completed his first two years of studies and will proceed to a foreign campus of his choice. Parents Jimmy (standing) and Judy Perez are excited about JJ graduating with a globally recognized foreign degree within the next two years. This educational concept is gaining popularity in regional Thames campuses in Hong Kong and Singapore. For more information, call 723-2207 and 723-2208.

PLAI forum

THE Philippine Librarians Association Inc. will hold a half-day forum on forging partnerships and linkages with media and book publishers today, June 21, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon at the National Library Auditorium. Cristina Pecson, TV newscaster; and Juan Carlos Sibal, vice president for operations, Central Book Supply Inc. will be the resource speakers. For more information, please call Teresita Moran (899-4344), Rebecca Jocson (527-9071 loc. 44) and Nora Conti (526-8295).

National security management convention

THE FEDERATION of the Industrial Security Organizations of the Philippines (Fisop) Inc. announces the holding of the 2001 National Security Management Convention on June 21 and 22 at the Heritage Ballroom of The Heritage Hotel Manila, Edsa corner Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. The convention is designed to be a forum for security professionals to discuss the latest relevant security issues and concerns. Keynote speaker shall be President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Attendance will be credited as equivalent to the Security management Seminar, a prerequisite for security agencies and company security forces for a new or renewal application of the license to operate. Interested parties may contact P/Col Ernsto Ison Lalog at 854-8888 ext. 7514/7421/7423.

MOA SIGNING
MARCH 23, 200
Habitat for Humanity
Foundation,
EX PHILI

CALTEX SUPPORTS THE HOMELESS

Caltex Philippines Inc. seals with a handshake its pledge to build more houses for the poor during the contract signing with Habitat For Humanity Philippines Foundation (HFHPF) at the Caltex office in Makati City. Caltex and HFHPF are in their third year of fruitful partnership in building shelter for poor families in various Habitat build sites nationwide. Caltex country chairman Nicholas Florio (fifth from left) and HFHPF chairman Tony Ng shake hands. Also shown are Caltex corporate affairs manager Marian Catedral and HFHPF director for resource development Arlyn Fausto.

PIONEER INSURANCE IN NAGA

Pioneer Insurance recently launched its newest branch in Naga City, the base of its expansion in the Bicol region. With 46 years of market leadership, Pioneer Insurance is reputed for its value-driven customer service and solid track record for fast and fair claims settlement. Present during the launch were (from left) David Coyukiat, president and CEO of Pioneer Insurance; deputy commissioner Vida T. Chiong of the Insurance Commission; Mayor Sulpicio S. Roco of Naga City; and Wilfredo A. Flores III, Naga branch head of Pioneer Insurance. The newest Pioneer Insurance branch is located at the third floor, Monzon Building, E. Angeles corner Arana Streets, Naga City.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, June 20, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	75	75	74	74.5	237,200
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39	39	38.5	39	91,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	216	218	216	218	84,430
Philippine National Bank	47	47	46	47	50,000
Phil. Savings Bank	29	29	29	29	1,100
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	55,000
Filipino Fund Inc	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	60,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1330	1330	1325	1325	1,170
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1105	1110	1105	1110	3,890
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	39.5	40	39.5	40	23,900
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.54	740,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	1,000,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	140,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.3	0.33	0.3	0.33	110,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	715	730	715	725	109,150
Ivantage Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	110,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.038	0.039	147,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	39.5	40	39.5	39.5	29,200
Manila Electric Co. B	55.5	56	55.5	55.5	306,900
Petron Corp.	2.2	2.24	2.16	2.24	11,345,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	70,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	2.85	2.6	2.8	9,800,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	40,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.15	0.155	210,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	330,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	60,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.18	202,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	20,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4	4.65	4	4.65	6,186,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	32,100
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	26.5	27	26.5	27	38,000
RFM Corp.	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.36	2,597,000
San Miguel Corp. A	42.5	43	42.5	43	88,900
San Miguel Corp. B	48	48	47.5	47.5	383,300
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.8	0.82	0.78	0.78	290,000
Ayala Corp.	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	497,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.86	0.89	0.86	0.88	330,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.53	37,250,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	124,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.06	2.12	2.06	2.12	25,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.24	0.29	0.24	0.28	170,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.24	820,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.78	1.84	1.72	1.78	16,814,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.15	660,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	9,000,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	2,520,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	500,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.04	0.042	0.04	0.042	1,100,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.02	1.06	1.02	1.06	1,064,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	26	26.5	26	26.5	163,800
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.25	0.3	0.25	0.3	240,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	30,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Ionics Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	73,700
Ipeople Inc.	1	1	1	1	60,000
Ipeople Inc. B	1	1	1	1	40,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.08	2.12	2.08	2.12	169,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	500,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	630,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	830,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	50,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	510,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1	1.2	1	1.2	11,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	6,000
Music Corp.	2.12	2.2	2.12	2.16	162,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	190,000
Reynolds Philippine Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	40,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15 75	15.75	15 5	15.75	91,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.5	0.5	5,800,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.54	0.55	0.54	0.54	490,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	10,000
Manila Jockey Club	16	16	16	16	17,000
Philippine Racing Club	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.3	45,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	40.5	40.5	40	40	29,600
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	10,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	670	670	670	670	2,200
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	522,000,000
RFM Corp.-Pref.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	374,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	19,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	6,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.03	0.031	0.029	0.03	22,900,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8	8	8	8	15,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	4,067,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	840,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	3,100,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.16	2.24	2.16	2.22	2,629,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.27	0.27	680,000
SM Development Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	30,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.7	6.7	6.4	6.4	5,154,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.08	0.085	0.08	0.085	500,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	6,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	8,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	19,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	30,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.043	0.045	0.042	0.045	28,100,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.19	0.23	0.19	0.195	6,010,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.22	0.23	0.205	0.22	3,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	96,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	86,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	171,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.018	0.019	0.018	0.018	6,700,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.38	0.46	0.38	0.4	8,420,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.4	0.46	0.4	0.41	9,200,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	340,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.02	14,400,000
Interport Res.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	19,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	5,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	14,600,000

CURRENCIES

June 20, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.170686	1.000000	52.2820
Japan	Yen	0.009526	0.008137	0.4254
United Kingdom	Pound	1.640834	1.401600	73.2785
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.150097	0.128213	6.7032
Switzerland	Franc	0.655464	0.559897	29.2725
Canada	Dollar	0.763359	0.652061	34.0911
Singapore	Dollar	0.644473	0.550509	28.7817
Australia	Dollar	0.610177	0.521213	27.2501
Bahrain	Dinar	3.105433	2.652661	138.6864
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.312158	0.266645	13.9407
Brunei	Dollar	0.642599	0.548908	28.6980
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000088	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.025906	0.022129	1.1569
UAE	Dirham	0.318771	0.272294	14.2361
Korea	Won	0.000898	0.000767	0.0401
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.854200	44.6593
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.436746	22.8340
France	Franc	0.152450	0.130222	6.8083
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.387619	20.2655
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.062077	3.2455
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.021175	1.1071
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000441	0.0231
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.143666	7.5111
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004261	0.2228
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005134	0.2684
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.021175	1.1071
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.08461	56.7056

Megaworld allots ₱1.3B for Marina project in Malate

By Doris C. Dumlao

PREMIER property developer Megaworld Corp. has earmarked P1.3 billion this year to start the construction of the Marina Sheraton Square Complex in Malate, originally intended to be the flagship project of scandal-ridden BW Resources Corp.

BW has now been renamed Fairmont Holdings Inc., which is being converted into Megaworld's low-cost housing arm. The Malate project is being continued through a joint venture between Fairmont and Megaworld.

In an interview after the Megaworld stockholders' meeting yesterday, company chair and CEO Andrew Tan said Megaworld would spend about P2.6 billion for capital expenditures this year, of which half would go to the development of the Sheraton Marina complex.

Tan also estimated that Megaworld's net income would, under the best-case scenario, rise by 10 percent this year amid the continuing weakness in the property sector.

Megaworld chalked up a net profit of P616.71 million last year, down from P874.88 million in 1999.

"I think that's the most we can do under the current circumstances but we are hopeful that very soon the situation will improve," Tan said.

Still, Tan said Megaworld would go full blast with the development of the Malate project after the company took over management control of Fairmont, which was now being groomed to become its low-cost housing arm.

BW earlier signed a memorandum of understanding with state-owned Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) for the lease of 300,000 square meters of the Marina Sheraton Square complex for a new casino.

The casino, which is envisioned to contain modern entertainment and recreation center, is part of Pagcor's ongoing casino modernization and expansion program.

Based on earlier estimates, the full development of the Malate project would cost P2.4 billion.

Overall, however, Megaworld's expansion would also focus on the further development of its flagship project, the Eastwood cyberpark, a pioneer in the information technology zone model. It is opening up more office space in the cyberpark to accommodate more IT locators.

Fairmont to raise ₱1B through rights offering

GAMING stock Fairmont Holdings Inc. is planning a stock rights offering within the next five months to raise the P1 billion needed to jumpstart its conversion into a low-cost housing arm of premier property developer Megaworld Corp.

In an interview with reporters after Megaworld's stockholders meeting yesterday, company chair and CEO Andrew Tan said the rights offering would allow new investors to buy into Fairmont.

"We don't mind to be diluted if investors are willing to participate in the fund raising for Fairmont. For the good of Fairmont, we don't mind being diluted," Tan said.

Fairmont, formerly known as BW Resources Corp. (which was the subject of a big price manipulation scandal at the Philippine Stock Exchange during the fallen Estrada regime), is now being groomed by Megaworld as its vehicle to penetrate the lower end housing sector.

Tan said Megaworld would definitely participate in the planned stock rights offering, the company now being the controlling shareholder of Fairmont. He said the cash infusion to Fairmont would come from internally generated funds of Megaworld.

The price of Fairmont shares was unchanged at P0.54 at the local stock market yesterday.

Earlier, Fairmont obtained P350 million worth of fresh equity infusion from global investment company Emerging Market Assets Ltd. of Hong Kong, which acquired 17.5 percent of Fairmont.

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. confirmed ongoing review of the respective cable businesses of **Mediaquest Holdings Inc.** and the Lopez Group in connection with the planned merger of the Home Cable and Skycable television operations.

* * *

BOULEVARD Holdings Inc.'s disposal of shares of stocks in **Bonifacio Land Corp.** is to settle obligations of **Askar Ltd.**, a subsidiary of Boulevard Holdings, and the balance of obligations to **Metro Pacific Corp.**

* * *

WISE Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 30 at 9 a.m. at the Boardroom, 16/F Tower I, The Enterprise Center, Makati. Record date is on June 18.

* * *

MANILA Bulletin Publishing Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 12 at 10 a.m. at the Quezon Hall, Philippine Columbian Association, Paco, Manila. Record date is on June 15.

* * *

UNIWIDE Holdings Inc. confirmed that **Land Bank of the Philippines** filed with the SEC a motion to terminate the rehabilitation proceedings of the **Uniwide Group of Co.**

* * *

STENIEL Manufacturing Corp. amended its articles of incorporation reducing the number of directors from 11 to seven.

* * *

MARGARITO B. Teves replaced Editha I. Alcantara as member of the board of directors of **Alsons Cement Corp.** effective June 19. He will be the independent director in the board.

* * *

ELECTED to the board of directors of **Megaworld Corp.** were Andrew L. Tan, Thomas J. Barrack Jr., Katherine L. Tan, George T. Yang, Gerardo C. Garcia, Cirilo L. Manlangit and Roberto S. Guevara.

* * *

ELECTED to the board of directors of **Philippine Bank of Communications** were Luy Kim Guan, Chung Tiong Tay, Ralph Nubla Jr., Henry Y. Uy, Isidro C. Alcantara Jr., Enrique T. Luy, Carlos Chung Bunsit, Atty. Bi Yong So Chungunco, Ernesto T. Luy, Edwin L. Luy and Peter Lim.

* * *

EQUITABLE PCI Bank Inc. accepted the resignation of Winston F. Garcia and Roberto S. Malonzo as directors of the bank effective June 19. *Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research*

RP-Japan . . .

(From page B1)

Japan since negotiations started in March.

Agreement between the two countries would be another step forward for creating the regional currency safety network, known as the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI), after Japan agreed to set up a bilateral swap scheme with three Asian nations last month.

Japan in May agreed to set up a $3-billion currency swap deal with Thailand, a $2-billion pact with South Korea and a $1-billion swap facility with Malaysia while holding talks with the Philippines and China.

The CMI is seen as an important step on the long and rocky road to Asian monetary integration. It aims to link international reserves of the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean)—Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam—with those of Japan, South Korea and China. *Reuters*

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Japan's trade surplus falls as exports slow

TOKYO—Japan's trade surplus with the world dived 86.1 percent in May from a year earlier, official data showed Wednesday, as a slowing global economy chipped away at Japanese exports and cheap imports from Asia soared.

The merchandise trade surplus was 80.1 billion yen ($652 million), down from 575 billion, the Finance Ministry said. That was the lowest since January 1996, a ministry official said.

Japan's trade surplus had been declining in recent years. Its trade balance swung into a deficit in January for the first time in four years.

Falling exports in recent months have added to worries about Japan's fragile economy as it struggles to reverse a prolonged slump. Recent data suggest the world's second biggest economy is sinking into its fourth recession in a decade.

The Bank of Japan downgraded its economic assessment on Monday, citing falling exports as prompting a decline in output.

Economists said the declining trend in the trade surplus would continue for some time because slowdowns in major trading partners, especially the United States, were taking a toll on exports and price-competitive imports from Asia were continuing to rise.

"It's still the case that exports are weakening year on year," said Matthew Poggi, economist at Lehman Brothers in Tokyo. "Imports are quite strong, which is somewhat interesting, given weak domestic demand."

The trade surplus is unlikely to expand since imports are on a growth trend and exports remain stagnant, according to the Finance Ministry official.

The ministry said exports fell 0.9 percent, the second straight decline in value terms, to 3.82 trillion yen while imports jumped 14 percent to 3.73 trillion yen.

Export sectors most severely hit included semiconductors and electrical machinery, which fell 15.9 percent due to the global downturn in the information technology sector.

Import volume continued to grow but at a slower pace, the official said. However, imports will probably stay positive for some time as the yen remained weak against the dollar, making Japanese products relatively more attractive, he said.

Japan's surplus with the United States, its largest trading partner, fell 15.9 percent year-on-year to 390.6 billion yen.

The trade surplus with Asia plunged 84.1 percent, with imports rising 15.2 percent.

"We're certainly seeing a higher rate of import penetration, with imports replacing domestic goods as a share of demand," Poggi said. "It's also because of greater access and deregulation. *Reuters*

A MONEY dealer on the Tokyo Foreign Exchange speaks on the phone during Wednesday's morning trading as the US dollar bought 123 yen, down 0.24 yen from late Tuesday in Tokyo. The dollar edged lower against the yen on mild selling.
AP

Japan mulls zero growth

TOKYO—Japanese Economics Minister Heizo Takenaka will present an economic outlook this week that forecasts near-zero growth for the current fiscal year, which began in April, according to a government source.

Takenaka said Sunday that the government had no plan yet to revise its official estimate of a 1.7-percent growth for the year but that he would present a rough sketch of the economy for the near term when Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's advisers outline his economic reform policy this week.

"We are thinking about growth somewhere between zero and one percent, but it's going to be closer to zero," the government source told Reuters.

Lower growth estimates by the government, even if not yet a replacement for the official forecast, have been widely flagged after data last week showed gross domestic product contracted in the first quarter.

A Reuters poll of 25 economists published on Monday yielded a median forecast of zero GDP growth for the current fiscal year, with an average forecast of 0.1 percent growth. *Reuters*

Japan, US to launch new economic talks

TOKYO—Washington and Tokyo have reached a basic accord to launch a new round of talks later this year on bad loan disposals by Japanese banks and other economic issues.

The two nations will formalize the accord when Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and US President George W. Bush meet on June 30, with a view to entering into talks by autumn, according to the Asahi Shimbun newspaper.

A Japanese government official would not confirm the report but said both sides "have been working to set up a new economic framework and preparations for it have made steady progress."

"Nothing has been decided yet and everything is up to further arrangements between Japan and the United States," he said.

The Asahi Shimbun said Tokyo and Washington would set up two routes of governmental consultations—one for vice ministers and another for working-level officials.

The vice-ministerial talks, expected to be held once a year, would cover issues such as economic growth rates, restructuring of financial institutions and overseas investment, the daily said.

Japan would be represented in any discussions by officials from the Cabinet Office and foreign, finance and trade ministries, while the United States would send senior officials from the departments of state, along with treasury and trade representatives, it said.

Following a request by the United States, working-level talks would focus on Japanese banks' bad loan problems, deregulation in the telecommunications sector, competition policies and direct investment in Japan, it said.

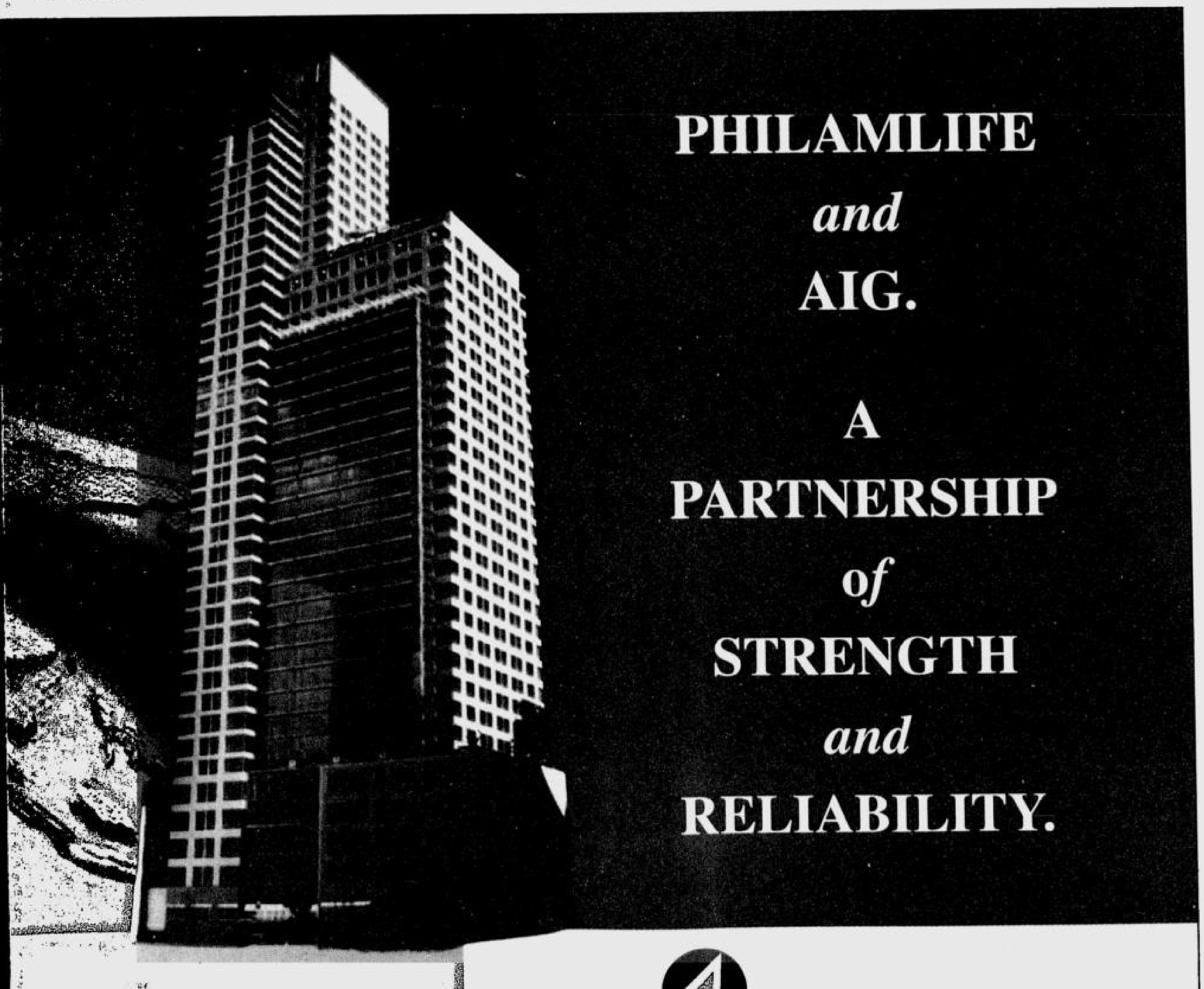
"It is certain that US interest in trying to contain Japan's strong economy up until the early 1990s is now shifting to how to help a weak Japan," the Asahi Shimbun said.

On the other hand, the US Congress was pressuring Washington for a "result" in trade issues due to record-level trade deficits with Japan and a rapid slowdown in the US economy, the influential daily said.

As well as governmental consultations, the two nations planned to set up "a round-table conference" joined by government officials and representatives from private-sector companies, the Asahi Shimbun said.

Proposed by Japan, the round-table meeting would represent the first public-private consultations between the two counties, it said.

They would meet once a year and aim to reflect opinions of internationally operating companies on policy-making, it said. *AFP*



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Greenspan's testimony to get close scrutiny

WASHINGTON—US lawmakers get a chance to sound out Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan on Wednesday about the economy's shaky prospects only days before policymakers gather for a key meeting on interest-rate policy.

The US central bank chief will appear before the Senate banking committee at mid-morning, part of a panel testifying on the banking system.

It will be Greenspan's first appearance before the committee since control of the Senate shifted to the Democrats from Republicans on June 5. As a result, its chairmanship is now held by sometimes combative Democratic Sen. Paul Sarbanes of Maryland instead of Republican Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas.

Greenspan's prepared testimony is expected to focus closely on banking matters. Questioners afterward, however, are certain to try to probe his thinking ahead of the meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee, which will be held next Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Fed has cut US short-term interest rates five times—by a half percentage point each time—already this year. Two of those cuts took place outside of regularly scheduled rate-setting meetings.

The most recent reduction followed the FOMC's scheduled May 15 meeting, and anticipation was high that another cut of a quarter to half percentage point would be announced next Wednesday at the conclusion of the FOMC gathering. *Reuters*

Most IT security breaches come from inside

NEW YORK—A large number of computer security breaches are committed by insiders rather than outside hackers, according to a survey.

The security software firm Camelot and the electronic magazine eWEEK said, in many cases, authorized users, such as employees, contractors and consultants, were responsible for the security breaches.

The survey of network administrations found that 57 percent of the respondents said they had experienced breaches from users accessing data for which they were not authorized.

Another 43 percent of respondents indicated security breaches were caused by user accounts left open after an employee had left the company.

"The results of the survey pinpoint a major Achilles heel too often unknown or underestimated by corporations," said Yuval Baharav, president and chief executive of Camelot.

"The recently publicized external hacks represent a very small portion of the constant infringements a network endures daily. Too often, 'authorized' user behavior goes unchecked. In an era of downsizing, mergers and acquisitions, proprietary information is at risk." *AFP*

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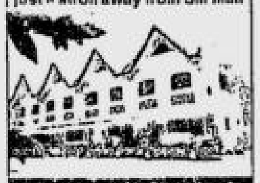

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REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

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MAKATI

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2BR San Juan 92513489

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MAKATI

MAGALLANES HOUSE POOL 8439292/8184966/8106557

SANLO 3BR 5268048/49

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E-mail addresses: opr-serv@pnoc-ec.com.ph

RE-INVITATION TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) invites accredited contractors to submit sealed bids for the:

CONCRETING OF ROAD AND CONSTRUCTION OF DRAINAGE CANAL AT ENERGY SUPPLY BASE
BX 01-653R

This invitation is open to all accredited contractors of PNOC Group Companies

Bid documents shall be available for issuance to accredited contractors starting June 18, 2001 at the above address.

For purposes of clarification, a pre-bidding conference and site inspection will be conducted on June 20, 2001 at 1:00 p.m. at Energy Supply Base Brgy. Mainaga, Mabini, Batangas.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the amount stipulated in the tender documents and in the form acceptable to PNOC EC. Sealed technical and financial bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Contracts Group not later than 2:00 p.m. June 27, 2001 at the above address. Public opening of the technical shall follow immediately thereafter. The schedule of the opening of the financial bids shall be formally announced to participating bidders and only the bids of technically complying bids shall be opened.

PNOC EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC EC.

(Sgd.) RICARDO S. BASALLO, Jr.
Chairman, Contracts Award Committee

(PDI -- June 21, 2001)

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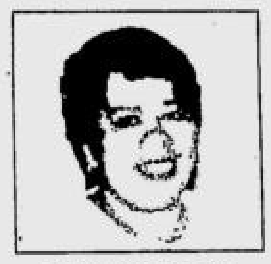

LISA YARED

Notice is given that the person whose picture appears above has a pending warrants of arrest before The Regional Trial Court of Ormoc (Branch 12) in a series of Criminal Cases Nos. 5271-0, 5272-0, etc. Reward will be given for information leading to her arrest.

Please contact the following numbers:
809-6122 and 809-3176 (Manila)
(032) 346-5311 (Cebu City)
(053) 255-2212 and 255-2402 (Ormoc City)

All information will be treated as strictly confidential.

(PDI -- June 21, 2001)

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"You will forever live in our hearts, Mama. We are grateful to the
Lord for having given you to us during your earthly life.
We are also grateful to Him for giving you now
the Eternal Peace and Joy promised to His faithful followers.
We will love you always. We will miss you. Till we meet again."

Esperanza Pahati Alvendia

passed on to her eternal reward
on June 19, 2001 at the age of 93

Her Children

Jose and Norma Alvendia, Sylvia and Rogelio Rodriguez, Carmen Alvendia,
Carmelino Jr. and Lisa Alvendia, Amador and Adoracion Alvendia

Grandchildren

Grace†, Ed and Lorna, Patrick and Anne,
Sandy and Dave, Rex and Johanna, Melanie, Bambi,
Eric, Dondi, Alan, Paolo, Marc, Angelo, Christine Denise, Niccolo

Great Grandchildren

Ryan, Eddie, Alex, Max, Savannah, Sydney, Lawrence, Iya, Zaki

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco, Santuario de San Antonio,
McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will take place on Saturday, June 23, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park
after the 9:00 am Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio.

"Give her the reward she has earned,
and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

The Chairman, Board of Directors, Officers, Management & Employees of
Philippine Phoenix Surety and Insurance, Inc.
express with deep regret the passing of

Esperanza Pahati Alvendia

Past Member of the Board of Directors
on
June 19, 2001 at the age of 93

We humbly request your prayers for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco,
Santuario de San Antonio, McKinley Road,
Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will take place on Saturday, June 23, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park
after the 9:00 am Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio.

"She watches over the affairs of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness;
Her children arise and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her."

Esperanza Pahati Alvendia

Chairman and President
The Jade Vine Restaurant, Inc.

passed on to her eternal reward
on June 19, 2001 at the age of 93

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco,
Santuario de San Antonio, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will take place on Saturday, June 23, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park
after the 9:00 am Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio.

---

*"...absent with the body
to be present with the Lord."*

JULIETA BAHIAN de SESTO

of Siquijor and Quezon City

*Now peacefully rest in the Infinite
Grace and Goodness of the Lord
on the 17th of June 2001
at the age of 50.*

Her bereaved husband **Antonio de Sesto, Jr.**; children **Kathleen, Antonio III** and **Jose Luis**; and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, 24 June 2001 at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz.

CARIDAD SALDAJENO y TELAN

*Peacefully joined our Creator
on June 17, 2001 at the age of 80.*

Her remains lie in state at
Sto. Rosario Parish, Pacita Complex,
San Pedro, Laguna.

Interment to be announced later.

CATALINA JIMENEA VALMADRID

*Died in the Grace of our Lord
on June 18, 2001.*

Her body lies in state at Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

A Mass will be offered on Thursday, June 21, 2001 at 8:00 a.m. at the Sacred Heart Parish, Kamuning, Quezon City

Erratum: Interment will be on June 21, 2001 right after the Mass (not June 23, 2001) at the Ever Memorial Garden, Lawang Bato, North Expressway, Valenzuela City.

---

*In Loving Memory of the
First Death Anniversary of*

Nelly Malang Amurao

(November 18, 1916 June 21, 2000)

of the City of San Fernando, Pampanga

Holy Mass will be offered at the following churches:

Parish of the Blessed Trinity *Pilar Village, San Fernando, Pampanga*	*June 21-28, 2001* *6:00 A.M*
Metropolitan Cathedral *San Fernando, Pampanga*	*June 21-28, 2001* *7:00 A.M*
Santisimo Rosario Parish *U.S.T. España*	*June 21, 2001* *7:30 A.M*
Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag *Manaoag, Pangasinan*	*June 22, 2001* *7:00 A.M*

I miss you so much, Mommy...

ALAN SUANINO y CIPRIANO

*Died in the Grace of our Lord on June 17, 2001
at the age of 51, in Manila.*

His bereaved wife Bella; children **Arvin, Gary, Jacqueline** and **Oliver**; parents, brothers and sisters, brothers- and sisters-in-law, and friends, request the pious readers to offer a little prayer for the repose of his soul.

The body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe.

Interment will be held after an 8:00 a.m. Mass on Saturday, June 23, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

LAWRENCE C. CERIA

Of Magsingal, Ilocos Sur
August 7, 1911 - June 15, 2001

Survived by his son **Jorge**; daughter-in-law **Lyn**; grandchildren **George Jordan, James Jason, Jonalyn, Ralph Jaeger, Jinky Ann** and **Vincent Jeaner**; brother and sister **Francisca Alvarez, Juan Ceria, Florencia Ceria, Victoria Tolete,** and **Hipolito Ceria.**

Interment will be on June 23, 2001 Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Quezon City at 10:00 AM.

His remains lie in state at No. 18 Pangilinan Drive, Project 8, Quezon City.

---

*O Sacred Heart, O Love Divine
Make our love so like to thine.*

In Loving Memory of

EUGENIA SUAREZ ATIENZA

December 3, 1910 — June 22, 1995
Widow of ***General Rigoberto J. Atienza***

Nayda and Dave, Baby and Victor, Mina, Sally and Benny, Jacky, and Jo request relatives and friends, and readers to remember her in their prayers and to join them in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to be held in the following Churches on June 22, 2001:

Sacred Heart Parish Church, *Scout Fuentebella, QC*	7:00 a.m./6:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Chapel, *Camp General Rigoberto J. Atienza, Libis, QC*	6:30 a.m.
Christ the King Mission Seminary Chapel, *E. Rodriguez, QC*	6:30 a.m.
Blessed Sacrament Church, *Singapore*	8:30 a.m.
Mary, Queen of Peace Church, *Washington, USA*	9:00 a.m.
St. Ignatius Cathedral, *Camp Aguinaldo, QC*	5:15 p.m.
St. Alphonsus De Liguori Church, *Magallanes Village, MC*	6:00 p.m.
Christ the King Parish Church, *Greenmeadows, QC*	6:00 p.m.
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish Church, *Bel Air, MC*	6:30 p.m.

A Memorial Breakfast will be held at the Janssen Hall, Parish Center, Sacred Heart Parish after the 7:00 a.m. Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved Papa

COL. MARCELO GAVIOLA LAPASARAN (MAC) PAF (Ret.)

Peacefully joined our Lord on June 17, 2001

His late wife **Cirila Dagandan** (†); loving children and in-laws **Teofisto** and **Milagros**, **Poly** and **Minie**, **Lisa** and **Alfred Mayer**, **Aida** and **Robert Guse**, **Rolando** (†), **Ana Fe** and **Joaquin Schwind**, **Boyet** and **Rizza**; grandchildren **Mitos, Bryan, Ethel, Andrei, Alexis, Andrew, Michelle, Alfred, Jr., Carol, Marvin, Melvin** and **Markvince**; great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.
His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels,
Dr. A. Santos Avenue, (Sucat), Parañaque City.
Interment will be on Saturday, June 23, 2001 at the *Libingan ng mga Bayani*,
Fort Bonifacio, Makati after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels,
Sucat, Parañaque City.

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Bldg. 1, Energy Center, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines
Tel. 840-2024 or 893-6001 loc. 1120
Fax No. (632) 840 1459
E-mail addresses: rbasalio@pnoc-ec.com.ph or ecangg@pnoc-ec.com.ph

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) invites all eligible suppliers and/or contractors to submit sealed bids for the supply, delivery, installation, testing and commissioning of:

REPLACEMENT ALLISON 501 KB5 GAS TURBINE ENGINE
PR NO. HN 213106

This invitation is open to all Allison authorized maintenance centers and/or suppliers.

Bid documents shall be available for issuance starting **June 8, 2001** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Seven Hundred Pesos (Php 700.00).

Bidders are required to submit a complete set of the following prequalification documents on or before **June 22, 2001**:

1. Company profile or brochures showing related projects completed
2. Annual Reports with audited financial statements for the past two (2) years
3. List of clients and bank references
4. Certification that the bidder is a bona-fide service contractor/supplier, obtained from their respective embassies or consular/trade offices in the Philippines or Philippine embassies in the country of origin
5. Certification from Rolls-Royce that the bidder is an Allison authorized maintenance center and/or supplier until 2002.

For purposes of clarification, a pre-bidding conference will be conducted at the above address on **June 29, 2001, 2:00 p.m., Manila time, at Bldg. I Conference Room** of the above address.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the amount stipulated in the tender documents and in the form acceptable to **PNOC EC**. Sealed technical and financial bids in two (2) sets shall be received by PNOC EC's Purchasing Department not later than **2:00 p.m., Manila time, July 10, 2001** at the above address. Late bids shall not be accepted. Public opening of the technical bids shall follow thereafter. The schedule of the opening of financial bids shall be formally announced to the participating bidders and only the bids of the technically complying bidders shall be opened.

PNOC EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC EC.

(Sgd.) **RUFINO B. BOMASANG**
President and CEO

(PDI--June 21, 2001)

PNOC
The Energy Company

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, M.M.
Telephone 8931320 ext. 5131 Fax 8401461

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION/ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites Contractors classified by and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Medium A in Electrical Works or General Building - Building and Industrial Plants to apply for prequalification/eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the project:

Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of the Leyte Rural Electrification Project-Stage VII, Schedule 3 (10 Barangays) under Bid/Project No. EDC 01-093

The work calls for the supply of minor materials, labor, supervision, equipment, tools, consumables, and other services necessary to provide electric power supply to the 10 Barangays located in the Towns of Hinundayan and Anahawan at Leyte.

The prequalification/eligibility forms may be secured from the Contracts Administration Group (c/o Raymond Sison) starting **June 20, 2001, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Hundred Pesos (PHP 100.00).

The prequalification/eligibility documents must be submitted to the Contracts Administration Group not later than 5:00 p.m. of July 4, 2001

Bid documents shall be issued to eligible Contractors starting July 20, 2001 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (PHP1,000.00)

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on July 27, 2001, 2:30 p.m. at PNOC-EDC's CAC Conference Rm., Ground Floor Building V.

Sealed bids in three (3) sets shall be received by the Contracts Administration Group at the above address not later than 2:00 p.m. of August 21, 2001 and then to be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder(s) whose bid(s) is(are) considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

(Sgd.) **Ester R. Guerzon**
Manager, Operations Services Division

(PDI--June 21, 2001)

PNOC PETROCHEMICAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(A WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY)

11/F, BA Lepanto Building
8747 Paseo de Roxas
1227 Makati City, Philippines
Tel No. (02) 841-0644
Telefax No. (02) 810-8418
Brgy. Batangas Dos
Mariveles, Bataan
Tel No. (047) 244-7441
Telefax No. (047) 244-6953

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION / ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation (PPDC) invites interested contractors currently accredited with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) in good standing to apply for qualification/eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the following project described below:

I.	Work Order No.	: WSC-00-012
II.	Project Title	: **Construction of PPDC Fire Station and Motorpool**
III.	Scope of Work	: Construction of PPDC Fire Station and Motorpool
IV.	Project Location	: Petrochemical Industrial Estate (PIE) in Limay and Mariveles, Bataan, Philippines
V.	Approved Budget	: Pesos Nine Million Sixteen Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Eight and 98/100 (P9,016,528.98)
VI.	Source of Funding	: PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation
VII.	Estimated Contract Duration	: One Hundred Twenty (120) Calendar Days
VIII.	PCAB License Minimum Requirement	
	Classification	: Medium A
	Category	: Building and Industrial Plants
IX.	Similar Contracts	Construction of Buildings and Other Industrial Facilities
X.	Credit Line / Cash Deposit Certificate Requirement	Pesos Nine Hundred One Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Two & 90/100 (P901,652.90)
XI.	Eligibility Statement Forms	: One (1) set each to be filled up and submitted for every project
	Cost of Forms	: One Hundred Pesos per set (P100.00/set)
	Date and Time of Issuance	June 20 to July 03, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance and Submission of Accomplished Eligibility / Statements Documents	PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B. A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department or PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
	Deadline of Submission	On or before July 10, 2001 at 3:00 p.m.
XII.	Notice of Eligibility/Ineligibility	
	Date and Time of Issuance	July 02 - 30, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance	PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B. A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department
XIII.	Pre-bid Conference	
	Date and Time	August 23, 2001 at 9:30 a.m.
	Venue	PPDC Conference Room PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration
XIV.	Bid/Tender Documents	Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents
	Cost of Documents	One Thousand Pesos per set (P1,000.00/set)
	Date and Time of Issuance	July 31 to August 14, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance	PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B. A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department or PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
	Deadline of Submission	On or before September 14, 2001 at 9:30 a.m.
	Place of Submission	PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B. A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department

XV. BID OPENING IN THE SAME VENUE WILL FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION OF BIDS. LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Prospective bidders are required to submit original copy of Credit Line / Cash Deposit Certificate/s and original copies of pertinent documents such as Contractor's PCAB License, audited Financial Statements, etc. for verification/ authentication purposes.

All particulars relative to pre-qualification / eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of PD 1594 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, as amended, and other applicable rules and regulations.

PPDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PPDC. PPDC further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss that may incur in the preparation of their bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made

(Sgd.) **VICTORIO MARIO A. DIMAGIBA**
BAC - Chairman

(PDI - June 21 26 & 30 2001)

PNOC PETROCHEMICAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(A WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY)

11/F, BA Lepanto Building
8747 Paseo de Roxas
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Tel No. (02) 841-0644
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Mariveles, Bataan
Tel No. (047) 244-7441
Telefax No. (047) 244-6953

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION / ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation (PPDC) invites interested contractors currently accredited with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) in good standing to apply for qualification/eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the following project described below:

I.	Work Order No.	: WSC-00-043
II.	Project Title	: **PPDC Main Entrance Upgrading**
III.	Scope of Work	: Main Entrance Upgrading, Const. of Security Guards Facilities, Removal of Existing Canal, Sidewalk, Curbs and Gutters and Relocation of Existing Road Lighting and Electrical Distribution System
IV.	Project Location	: Petrochemical Industrial Estate (PIE) in Limay and Mariveles, Bataan, Philippines
V.	Approved Budget	: Pesos Eight Million Two Hundred Ninety Seven Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Nine and 10/100 (P8,297,469.10)
VI.	Source of Funding	: PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation
VII.	Estimated Contract Duration	: One Hundred Eighty (180) Calendar Days
VIII.	PCAB License Minimum Requirement	
	Classification	: Medium A
	Category	: Road, Highway Pavement, Horizontal Structures and Bridges/ Building and Industrial Plant
IX.	Similar Contracts	: Construction of Roads, Highway Pavement of Subdivisions, Villages to include Drainage Systems and Entrance Gates
X.	Credit Line / Cash Deposit Certificate Requirement	: Pesos Eight Hundred Twenty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Forty Six & 91/100 (P829,746.91)
XI.	Eligibility Statement Forms	: One (1) set each to be filled up and submitted for every project
	Cost of Forms	: One Hundred Pesos per set (P100.00/set)
	Date and Time of Issuance	: June 20 to July 03, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance and Submission of Accomplished Eligibility / Statements Documents	: PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B. A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department or PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
	Deadline of Submission	On or before July 10, 2001 at 3:00 p.m.
XII.	Notice of Eligibility/Ineligibility	
	Date and Time of Issuance	July 02 - 30, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance	PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B. A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department
XIII.	Pre-bid Conference	
	Date and Time	August 23, 2001 at 9:30 a.m.
	Venue	PPDC Conference Room PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration
XIV.	Bid/Tender Documents	Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents
	Cost of Documents	One Thousand Pesos per set (P1,000.00/set)
	Date and Time of Issuance	July 31 to August 14, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance	PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B. A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department or PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
	Deadline of Submission	On or before September 14, 2001 at 2:00 p.m.
	Place of Submission	PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B. A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department

XV. BID OPENING IN THE SAME VENUE WILL FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION OF BIDS. LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Prospective bidders are required to submit original copy of Credit Line / Cash Deposit Certificate/s and original copies of pertinent documents such as Contractor's PCAB License, audited Financial Statements, etc. for verification/ authentication purposes.

All particulars relative to pre-qualification / eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of PD 1594 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, as amended, and other applicable rules and regulations.

PPDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PPDC. PPDC further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss that may incur in the preparation of their bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **VICTORIO MARIO A. DIMAGIBA**
BAC - Chairman

(PDI - June 21 26 & 30 2001)

OBITUARIES

Our Dearly Beloved Mamang

Luz Garcia-Olivera

Muntinlupa City and Ibajay, Aklan

Peacefully joined her Creator on 17th June 2001 at the age of 92.

Her loving children and in-laws **Hon. Remedios Olivera-Oñas** (Sapian, Capiz), **Gabriel**, **Nilda** and **Ben**, **Filemon** and **Remy**, **Griselda** and **Tony**, **Juling**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Royal Chapel, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Masses will be offered daily at 8:00 PM.

The Funeral Mass will be on Sunday, June 24, 2001, 8:00 a.m. at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque City.

RICARDO G. PALANCA

(November 26, 1926 - June 14, 2001)

has peacefully joined his Creator on June 14, 2001
at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Camden, New Jersey, USA

His loving wife Ching; children **Rick & Carol**, **Bob & Lina**, **Erick & Arlene**, **Aton & Claire Pormento**, **Ramon & Cecille Rivera**, **Roy & Ingrid**, and **Ronnie & Ann**;

His grandchildren **Carla**, **Richie**, **RG**, **Robert**, **Raycel**, **Christopher**, **Reiner**, **Kaye**, **Candy**, **Aicee**, **TJ**, **Karen**, **Kathleen**, **Micky**, **Patricia**, **Nikki**, **EL**, **Alex** and **Almeleen**; brothers & sisters-in-law, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will arrive on Wednesday evening and will lie in state at the Palanca Hall of Holy Trinity College in Bato, Camarines Sur on Thursday, June 21. Interment will be on Sunday, June 24, after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at the Bato Catholic Cemetery.

We design obituaries for free.

SRA. AMPARO FRANCISCO DALIDA

of Vinzons, Camarines Norte

Has serenely joined the Lord in her Kingdom on June 19, 2001 at the age of 73.

Her bereaved daughter **Sonia D. Pabalan** and son-in-law **Andy** and the whole family, children and grandchildren request the kind readers to please pray for her eternal rest.

Her body lies in state at San Lorenzo Ruiz, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Funeral Mass will be on Sunday, June 24, 2001 at 8:00 a.m. at San Lorenzo Ruiz Chapel.

Interment will immediately follow at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat.

Our Dearly Beloved

Dra. Anastacia "Tacing" Masilungan

Of San Juan, Batangas

Peacefully joined her Creator on June 19, 2001 at the age of 69.

Her bereaved sisters and brothers **Taling** and **Melchor** (†), **Emil** (†) and **Lina**, **Vita** and **Nes**, **Mina** and **Levy** (†), **Fred** (†) and **Itay**, **Leming** and **Baby**; nephews and nieces, and other relatives would like to request you to remember her in your prayers.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Chapel G, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Holy Mass will be celebrated on June 23, 2001 at 9:00 AM. Cremation follows.

ANTONIO G. GASKELL

Peacefully joined his Creator on June 19, 2001 at the age of 86.

His loving wife **Vicky**; children **Didith** and **Tony Cabuñag**, **Bobby** and **Mickey**, **Manny** and **Lisa**, **Monet**, **Joey**, **Tina** and **Mos Piamonte**, **Sonny** and **Mabel**; grandchildren **Alex** and **Tina**, **Adrian** and **Mikki**, **Bernice**, **Anton** and **Miguel**, **Nico**, **Javier** and **Christian**, **Ria** and **Rafael**, **Dino**, **Alissa** and **Luigi**; great grandchildren **Cara** and **Joaquin** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Our Lady of Beautiful Love Parish Church, Merville Park Homes, Parañaque, Metro Manila.

Cremation will be on Sunday, June 24, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque after the 1:00 PM Mass at Our Lady of Beautiful Love Parish.

LUIS "LOUIE" CASIPI DOOLITTLE, JR.

of Tondo, Manila

Died in the Grace of our Lord on June 19, 2001 at the age of 63.

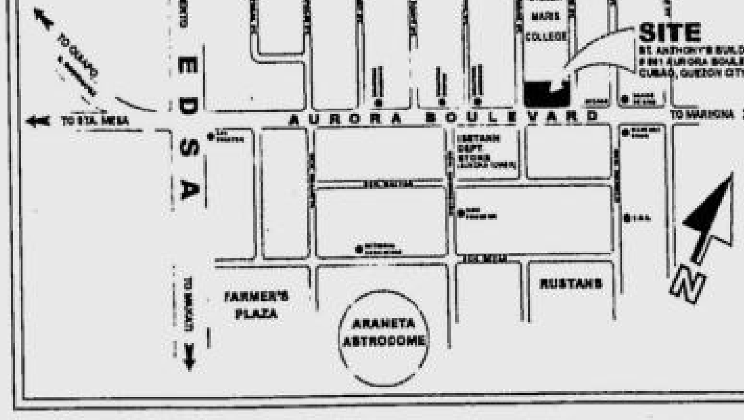
His bereaved family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Dulce Memorial Chapels, Chapel 1 (Ground Floor)

Jose Abad Santos Avenue,
Manuguit, Manila

Interment will be on Saturday, June 23, 2001

Starting June 20, 2001, **INQUIRER Classifieds** Aurora branch is now open to serve your Classified Ads requirements. For inquiries, please call **421-1420 or 421-0343**.



I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die.

John 11:25-20

Nissan launches new Sentra Exalta

BY VERNON B. SARNE

SENTRA Exalta: Refined luxury backed by advanced technology

HAS the new heir to the compact sedan segment throne arrived?

Nissan Motor Phils. last week put an end to the market's agony of waiting for the all-new Sentra, unveiling the latest iteration of its bread-and-butter model which should leave other carmakers shaking their heads with a handsome styling and a host of unmatched features.

More than 10 centimeters longer, about as wide as, and about half a centimeter taller than the outgoing model, the new Sentra Exalta features a design motif that strikes the perfect balance between sportiness and elegance. Think of it as having the aggressive stance of a sports sedan and the exquisite styling cues of a midsize saloon. Up front, it flaunts an Infiniti-inspired grille and sleek headlamps complemented by an elegant bumper reminiscent of that used by Mercedes in its current sedans. The rear part is lean, with taillights that will not look out of place on a luxury sedan.

The 1.6-liter DOHC 16-valve in-line-4 QG16DE engine residing under the hood of the new Sentra Exalta, retains a maximum output of 116 horsepower and a maximum torque of 14.9 kg-m. This motor—found on the GS Grandeur (automatic), GS (automatic), and LS (manual) variants—features valve timing control, electronic direct ignition, and a 3-way catalytic converter. The 1.5-liter, 104-horsepower engine is still available in the DS variant, mated to either manual or automatic transmission.

Nissan has once again upped the ante for compact sedan value with the top-of-the-line GS Grandeur variant. Boasting of luxurious toys and appointments inside, this sedan will shame many variants in the higher-end midsize sedan category. It is equipped with a Clarion VCD entertainment system with a 6-disc CD changer and a screen that pops up from the center console. Controls for this audio-visual system are found on the steering wheel. A head-up digital display reflects the travel speed on the driver-side windshield. The rear-view mirror comes with a digital rear distance warning system that actually tells you to stop if there's no more room for backing up.

Other interior features include a hands-free audiophone system that recharges most Nokia and Motorola phones; full beige leather seats; two-tone beige color; woodgrain finish; leather door trims; a 4-spoke leather steering wheel with woodgrain trim; full automatic climate control system; illuminated vanity mirrors; a sunglass holder; center armrest with cupholders at the back; and a seat-back hanger.

Safety features are speed-sensing door locks which automatically activate at 10 kph; driver-side airbag; ABS; rear back-up sensors; and keyless entry system with immobilizer.

"The product concept of the new generation Sentra Exalta is 'refined luxury backed by advanced technology,' which enables it to be positioned as a sub-M class car," Nissan Motor Co. segment chief product specialist Hiroatsu Hirata said.

The new Sentra Exalta is available in black, silver, white, red, blue and moss green pearl.

Prices for the new Sentra Exalta are P875,000 for the 1.6 GS Grandeur automatic; P835,000 for the 1.6 GS automatic; P760,000 for the 1.6 LS manual; P710,000 for the 1.5 DS automatic; and P680,000 for the 1.5 DS manual.

Trust and a risky business

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

WHENEVER you turn over your car to an auto repair or service shop, you are taking a big risk. In effect, you entrust a valuable piece of property, in which you have invested hundreds of thousands if not over a million pesos, to a profit-making entity whose principals you hardly know—unless the shop happens to be owned by a relative, which is rare.

But running an auto repair shop is a risky business for the owner, too. Martin Tancinco, proprietor of Martin's Car Accessories, Autoparts and Services at Alabang Town Center's Motortown, points out that if a mechanic makes a mistake—for example, in performing an oil change—the consequences could cost the shop owner an arm and a leg. The engine may have to be replaced at a cost of P50,000 for a surplus or around P250,000 for a new powerplant, if the car in question is a Corolla.

For Tancinco, age 28, it's a risky business because he guarantees all the work done in his shop. He is confident that his mechanics have the skills, the experience and the motivation to do the job right every time. Martin's has eight full-time mechanics, four of whom are all-around electricians and two specialize in the repair of auto air-conditioners. "My service bay is almost always full," Tancinco says. "I don't have that much space for back jobs."

Like other auto repair shops operating outside of and competing with the service departments of car dealers, Martin's has to continually earn the trust of car owners. The advantages Martin's offers are quick, honest repair service and lower prices. A paint job that would take a week at the dealer's, for instance, would require only two days at Martin's. On the other hand, when Tancinco believes that his shop cannot handle a job, he advises the car owner to go to the dealer.

Martin Tancinco can charge lower prices because he gets genuine original and Japanese-made replacement parts cheaper from parts sub-importers. A business and finance graduate of Kingston College in London, where he lived for eight years, Tancinco learned the auto repair trade when he worked in the service department of a well-known car company in Metro Manila for two and a half years. Not liking the decisions being made by management, he quit and opened his own auto repair shop in September 1994. Half of the capital came from his parents and half came from his savings from his earnings as a part-time gasoline station employee and other odd jobs in the United Kingdom.

Martin's was originally located on Alabang-Zapote Road at the rear of a cramped office compound that also housed a pet shop and Perico's Restaurant. Although Martin's was not visible from the road and Tancinco, not having the wherewithal to hire a mechanic, did all the labor himself while a mathematician friend did bookkeeping and sales, word got around and soon Martin's bay was filling up with customers' cars. After nine months marked by an increasing workload, Tancinco recalls, mechanics began showing up to apply for work. The wonder of it all was that Martin's never advertised.

It is a measure of Martin's success that the shop moved to Motortown at the Alabang Town Center (ATC) in 1997, despite a rental rate four times higher than the old site. Tancinco likes ATC Motortown because of its proximity to the mall and its spacious guarded parking area. Customers can go malling while waiting for their cars to be finished and if the work on a vehicle will take more than a day, it can be parked overnight across from Martin's as the parking area is guarded even at night.

The low turnover of mechanics at Martin's is another indicator that Tancinco must be managing his business right. "My mechanics have been with me for years," he claims. The volume of work enables him to pay salary rates that are considered high in the auto repair shop business. Aware that their boss can do the work himself and regularly checks up on them, the mechanics are constantly kept on their toes.

Tancinco acknowledges that he can make a lot more money faster by cheating his customers, such as charging them for labor and parts that are invoiced but were not actually done and installed. But by doing so, he would risk losing the trust of his customers. In the risky business of auto repair, Martin's has shown so far, trust built by honesty does matter. And if you're good, there's no need to advertise.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: There are three kinds of people: those who can count and those who can't.

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@pacific.net.ph

How to bring home your car to RP

MANY *balikbayans* and overseas Filipino workers want to bring home their personal cars to the Philippines. Here are some tips from the Bureau of Import Services of the Department of Trade and Industry. Know these tips and avoid fixers who will only take you for a very expensive ride.

Not just any Tom, Dick and Harry is qualified to bring in a used car. According to the BIS, you have to be a *balikbayan* (a Filipino working and residing abroad) or a holder of a 13A or 13G visa. A 13G visa is given to a former Filipino citizen, while a 13A visa is issued to foreigners married to Filipino citizens.

Only those who have worked or are working and residing abroad for at least one year are allowed to import their personal used cars into the country. This one-year residency requirement can be accumulated over a period of three years.

The car must be registered under the name of the importer for at least six months prior to the submission of the application to the BIS.

Application forms for prior approval have to be filled out completely and legibly. The BIS forms are available at Philippine consulates, the BIS office, DTI regional offices and can be downloaded from the website at DTI.gov.ph/BIS. These forms have to be filled out and processed prior to importing a car.

Other documents to be submitted include a notarized Affidavit of Undertaking, authenticated copies of all pages of your old and new passports, car title of registration, Alien Certificate of Registration, Immigrant Certificate of Residence, a 2x2 picture and payment of the BIS processing fee of P1,500 for cars and P900 for motorcycles.

With complete documents, a certificate of prior approval can be issued within three days.

Not all types of cars are allowed entry. According to the BIS, only left-hand drive vehicles within 3,000 kilos gross weight are allowed. Vehicles must also meet Philippine safety and emission standards.

The Bureau of Customs is responsible for the release of a car once it has reached port. Some people opt to hire the services of a duly licensed customs broker to deal with Customs.

The BIS requires payment of taxes and duties on the imported car and the personal appearance of the importer before a car can be released by the Customs.

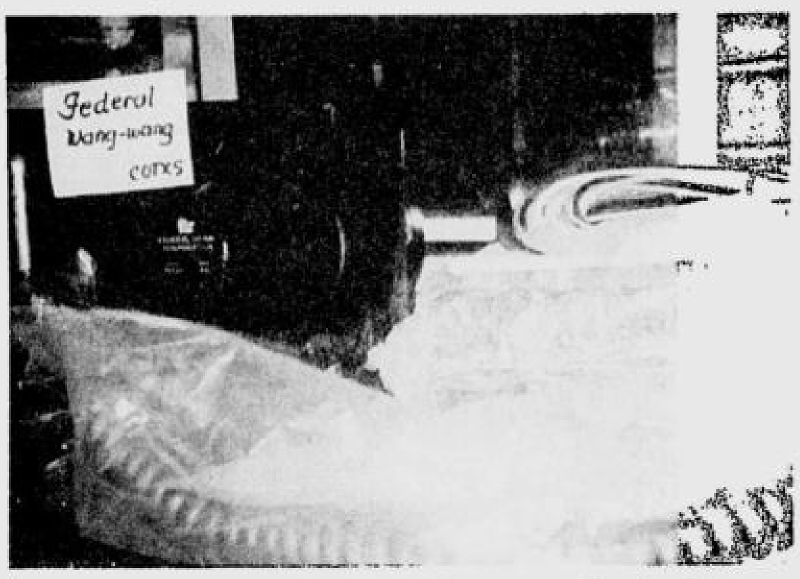
The BIS also advises importers to send their car to the Manila International Container Terminal at the North Harbor. Processing the entry of your car will be easier with the presence of a one-stop-action center located at the MICT.

For further queries, please call up the Import Action Division of the BIS at 890-5418.

What's legal to install?

UNDER PRESIDENTIAL Decree 96, some devices are prohibited from being attached to a motor vehicle, except those properly authorized. These are sirens, bells, horns, whistles or similar gadgets that emit exceptionally loud or startling sounds. Other prohibited devices are dome lights, police and emergency red flashing lights installed on the front or rear, and emergency red light blinkers.

Also prohibited are other similar signaling or flashing devices, which are inconsistent with sound traffic discipline and control on the highways.



THE SUPPOSEDLY regulated federal "wangwang" is priced between P15,000 and P16,000 at Banawe and Makati car accessory stores.

THE SOUPED-UP taillight featured last week.

Wheel Handle K
360° EASY CONTROL

OVERSIZED wart? Nope, it's a knob for your steering wheel that costs P350 at Banawe and Makati accessory stores. Exclusively for the lazy, it could make you lose control of the steering wheel

Exuberance . . .

(From page B12)

Wart on wheels

Clueless mom, even if she's the groovy one, could find this thing strange because it could distract one's hold on the steering wheel. It looks like an oversized wart on top of your steering wheel. It's called the steering wheel knob and fits all types of vehicles, for just P350 in Banawe and Makati car accessory stores.

Fond of steering with one hand? Try maneuvering your vehicle just by gripping this knob. Using just the knob as your hold while maneuvering the vehicle isn't considered safe, especially when your wheels hit a large object on the road. There is a greater risk of losing control, said eight-time rally champ Vip Isada, who also gives driving safety sessions to motorists.

As we rummaged through tire accessories in the Banawe area, agents were saying that while size 17 was the in-thing in 2000, motorists are going now back to size 15 this year.

Ben Oks, one of the biggest tire accessory stores on Banawe, said that Taiwan-made tires (using Japanese materials) are selling like hotcakes. Popular imported brands are League Racing, Miles magwheels, Volk Racing. A saleable tire is still the Pirelli, said a staffer of Ben Oks.

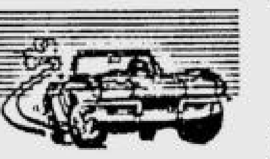
Spoon magwheels are another "in" thing among young motorists. Magwheels cost upward of P18,000, depending on their "authenticity."

One unsolicited advice of Land Transportation Office safety education chief Daisy Jacobo: If the accessory will get in the way of sound discipline and control on the highway, then that accessory is not going to be good for you.

Jail those road-diggers

FULL TANK

Al S. Mendoza



THE TROUBLE with city excavations is that most of them are never completed at all. Contractors just leave the holes, causing untold misery to both commuters and motorists.

Take East Avenue in Quezon City for example.

Over there, there are about three to four excavations that are being left unattended—months after the holes were dug up. They ripped the road apart months before the May 14 elections; today, they remain gaping holes.

As a result, commuters and motorists bound for City Hall agonize almost daily trying to negotiate the narrowed road.

It's like you're going through a bottleneck once you reach each of the excavations.

* * *

Another excavation that has been left unrepaired is the one at the Elliptical Road at the Quezon Memorial Circle, in front of Visayas Avenue.

That hole has been there for almost a year now. Almost every day, a traffic jam builds there as, like the excavations at East Avenue, you go through the rigors of a bottleneck.

Buses try to jockey positions all the time, and you can't blame them. At times, they hit fenders of cars trying to maneuver for space, causing instant jams that take time to untangle since Metropolitan Manila Development Authority personnel are too hard to find.

Mostly, the MMDA's men in blue are near Quezon Avenue, waiting to arrest unwary motorists crossing that traffic light across North Avenue that is defective from the very start. I wonder why these cops concentrate on just one traffic light when there are a lot of other choke points to be attended to?

* * *

I like the ad of Toyota's Echo and Echo Verso:

"Who says beauty is skin deep?

"Don't let good looks deceive you. The new Toyota Echo and Echo Verso are lookers with substance.

"Gorgeous body with a high-performance soul."

Both the Echo and Echo Verso aren't handsome by common standards. But inside both rests the beauty of the cars, with its 1.3 liter, VVT-I, DOHC 16V, EFI engine.

I believe in the saying, "Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder."

It's also like saying, "Don't judge a book by its cover."

* * *

Buyers of Volvo S60 continue to swoon over their cars.

Here's the so-called "Designer's Tale" of the vehicle.

"The task of designing a car must be one of the most fun bits of automotive development work. Creative tornadoes of wild ideas and emotions are gradually blended into a design that must face reality and meet the prerequisites of the concept.

"For the Volvo S60, the inspiration came from above—or from the coupé. The new sedan features the roofline of a coupé with two extra doors blended into its new design to reflect motion and emotion.

"Design a car that will appeal to younger people," said design director Peter Horbury. "Design it for those that normally wouldn't consider a Volvo. Young people who want to be perceived as having good taste and intelligence and, not least, as leading an active life and who had a social conscience. In short, design a Volvo sedan that is inspired by a sports car, and drives like one."

* * *

Dear Don Alfonso:

Magandang umaga.

Galing ako ng Binmaley noong Sabado at dumaan ako sa Camiling...Mahusay talaga ang national road system natin. Kaya lang muntik nang ma-aksidente kami dahil sa isang tricycle. Dahil sa ganda ng daan, gustong-gusto tuloy ng mga tricycle na magbiyahe sa national road kaysa sa mga barrio roads.

Pagkalagpas ng Camiling, may sinusundan akong tricycle. Noong wala nang kasalubong, pumuwesto ako para mag-overtake. Akalain mo ba namang kumaliwa ang tricycle sa kabilang (leftside) shoulder para ibaba ang pasahero!!!

Without looking at his rear-view mirror, or sumenyas man lamang. Panic braking agad ako and missed hitting the tricycle by an inch. Nahulog tuloy ang anak ko na nakaupo sa rear seat. Muntik ninyo na akong pag-lamayan.

By the way, kumusta ang eleksyon sa Mangatarem? 'Yung anak daw ni Agbayani ang gobernador natin? Nakatutok ako sa Orion, Bataan kung saan nanalong mayor ang pinsan ni kumander, si Antonio Raymondo Jr. Siya iyong nasabi ko sa iyong natalo noong nakaraan. Iyong namang kabarkada ko sa kolehiyo (Jessie Cruz) ay nanalong vice mayor ng Mandaluyong kahit mabigat ang kalaban. Puede ba natin silang batiin?

Inaabangan ko lang ang pagpasok mo sa pulitika, although tutol ang kumander mo. Ang tingin ko kasi diyan, if you have the calling, walang makakapigil kahit ilagay ang ulo mo sa bibig ng kanyon.

Pasensiya ka la ed sikame.

Arnel Doria

P.S. *Kailan ka pupunta sa Emmanuel's Café? Gusto kong magbukas ng red wine para sa kompleanyo ko.*

* * *

QUOTE ME. Check your wipers now as the rainy season is here.

CITY MEDIA CHALLENGE ROUND 2

Tafetta White tops 1.5 EXi category

STRAIGHT from covering the hostage-taking drama in Basilan, Tim Alipalo (Associated Press) of Team Tafetta White made it just in time for his 1.5 EXi run and managed to bag the winning time for the category. Team Tafetta White also won the top slot in the said category with the collective effort of the other team members—Conrad Carino (Manila Times), Benj Ngo (autoindustriya.com) and Jayson Jimenez (Auto Review). They clocked a total of 4:28.10.

Team Supersonic Blue—Eric Soriano (drive.com.ph); Andre Palma (kotse.com); Tessa Salazar (INQUIRER); Raymond Tribdino—finished second with a total time of 4:30.30, while Team Nighthawk Black—Ferman Lao (kotse.com); Andy Vital (dzRH); Jess Reyes (K-Lite); Aida Sevilla-Mendoza (INQUIRER) finished third with a time of 4:34.15.

In the 1.3 LXi category, Team Supersonic Blue clocked the best time earning them 25 championship points. Coming in second was Team Cypress Green with Jay Ortega (Gadgets Magazine); Bernard De Lara (Tempo); Raul Virtudazo (dzBB); and May Baetiong (BusinessWorld) earning 22 points. Rounding up the podium finishes was Team Iced Teal Blue with G Dadlani (autoindustriya.com); Eugene Limpin (Tempo); Miranda de Quiros (ABS-CBN); and Pinggot Zulueta (Manila Bulletin).

After two action-packed rounds, Team Supersonic Blue leads the pack in both the 1.3 LXi and 1.5 EXi categories with a total of 45 championship points in the former and 42 points in the latter. The second top overall finisher in the 1.3 category is Team Iced Teal Blue with 37 points. Tied for third place with a total of 35 points are teams Passion Orange composed of Angelo Almonte (dzMM); Matt Mallari (Motoring Today); Willie Caballes (Manila Buletin); and Sunburst Yellow with members Ferdie Baja (dzEC); Deo Macalma (dzRH); Shirley Flores (BusinessWorld); Aaron Favila (Associated Press); and Cypress Green.

In the 1.5 EXi category, Team Tafetta White is in second place with a total of 40 championship points, while Team Sunburst Yellow is in third with 38 points.

The City Media Challenge is presented by Honda Cars Philippines in partnership with Caltex Vortex and Havoline Energy. Sponsors include Bridgestone and Firestone tires, Nodalo's Trading, Aitech and the Manila Harbour Centre. This event is organized by ADBM Resources, Activity Asia Association and Roadwise Motoring School.

The final round of the City Media Challenge is set for July 14.

Taking (the ride through) Edsa for granted

NOT too many people may be aware of it, but the MRT-3 line, which spans the stretch of Edsa, will soon be celebrating its first anniversary. The service was inaugurated last July and has since become among the country's most popular forms of transport, shuttling passengers from all walks of life across the country's most historic thoroughfare, with comforts and conveniences previously unavailable, yet now considered as staple.

"I suppose you could say the MRT is now sort of being taken for granted," says Babee Barreiro, in-charge of sales and marketing for MRT 3 advertising. Which is just fine, she explains, since the MRT should over time become every bit a part of the Metro Manilans' routine.

Today, commuters expect to be brought to their places of work in cool, clean and spacious people movers—similar to their counterparts in other major Asian capitals. Every rush hour ride on-board Metro Manila's MRT is a scene that easily resembles one from Singapore's own MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) or Hong Kong's MTR (Mass Transit Railway). The MRT has become as much a part of life in the big city, as the traffic it hopes to help decongest.

MOTORING

Cesar D. Mangawang, Editor

Exuberance, or just plain insecurity?

TEXT&PHOTOS BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

(Last of two parts)

LET'S face it, we are an exuberant race. In a country where even pedicabs are jazzed up with TV screens and stereo amps you wouldn't wonder anymore if you see vehicles becoming instruments of self-expression.

But what is a vehicle if it isn't also an extension of ourselves—where we can wear curlers and maybe even build a sink on the passenger side so we can brush our teeth there too?

A businessman who lives in the south of Metro Manila turned his limousine into a mobile office, complete with a fax machine, satellite dish and laptop. A colleague informed us that this businessman found it productive to turn his "idle" travel time into work. His driver takes more than an hour to get him to the office—and another hour or more to take him back home.

A rich son of a tycoon jazzed up his P1.6-million Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution V for P3.3 million. The cost included installation of performance accessories that also heightened his vehicle's road performance.

"Poot! Poot!"

While a jeepney on the hurry would go "Waaa ... wa-ha-ha-ha-ha!" with its laughing siren, a power-tripping private motorist can get a US federal "wangwang" (siren horn) for P16,000 in a Makati accessory shop on Malugay Street, or get the same item for about P15,000 in a Banawe accessory store. An ordinary *wangwang* on a tight budget can go for as low as P3,500.

The problem is, too many motorists using too much siren for no urgent purpose have made people lose their respect for legit siren users. A week ago, an ambulance with a malfunctioning revolving dome light was not given way during an emergency because motorists thought it was just another "power tripping" motorist.

There are five ordinances from the Metro Manila Development Authority and Land Transportation Office and from three city governments—Pasay, Makati and Quezon City—disallowing the use of sirens and dome lights. In Japan and the United States, sirens and dome lights are considered regulated equipment, the sale of which is allowed only for people whose jobs require them to use such equipment. In the Philippines, buying the *wangwang* is just like buying fish in the *talipapa*.

"Ale, pabili nga ng sirena. Pakibalot, ha?"

Crouching tigers

If the hip-hop generation has its low waist pants, the Gen-X motorists' generation has its "low-skirt" vehicles. Lancer, Corolla, Honda and almost all other types of sedans are "lowered" at the Banawe district.

Lowering a vehicle means having its coil springs cut for P1,500. A man on Banawe who lowers vehicles says that he averages 10 customers a day. With the help of two or three staffers, the customer gets to drive away his lowered car three hours later. There are also especially designed customized coil springs for lowered vehicles. These could cost as high as P15,000.

Another "in" thing these days is a VCD player inside vehicles on an in-dash mounting device. A VCD player with tuner, antenna, roof mount and in dash could range P32,000 to P38,000 at Jaffas Auto center on Banawe. Banawe storeowners say VCD players are in demand among vehicle owners who often go out of town. The versatility of VCDs allows passengers to sing their traffic blues out via videoke CDs or just watch their favorite films, in wide screen quality, while on the road. High-end vehicles such as the 2001 Ford Expedition, for instance, already have built-in VCD players and monitor on the passenger side.

"In-flight" entertainment is perfectly fine say our motoring analysts. The key here is not to involve the driver in any way, lest it could distract the person behind the wheel from concentrating on the road.

EXUBERANCE,/p.B11

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LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

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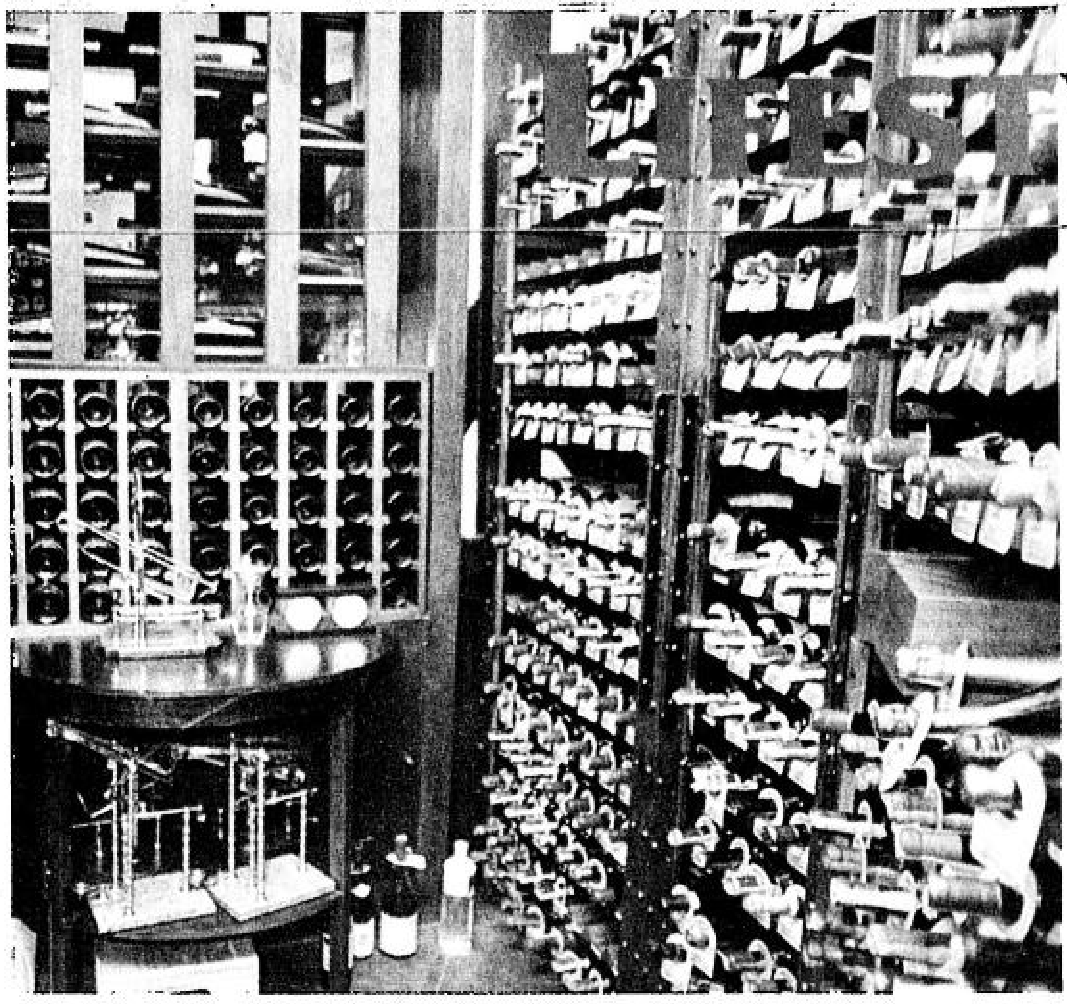
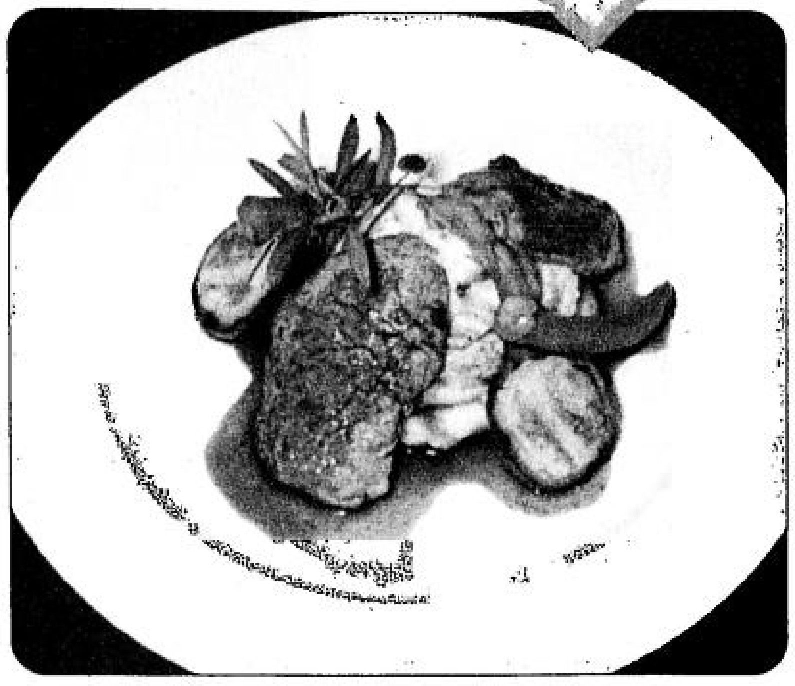


PICK the ideal vintage from the temperature-controlled wine cellar.



WILD boar served on mashed potato and garnished with native vegetables

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Wining and dining–Yats the life!

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA
PHOTOS BY ROGER CARPIO

LOVERS of fine wine and food who live in Central Luzon need not go all the way to Metro Manila nowadays for a taste of the good life. Yats International, the country's first and, so far, only wine club, will do as nicely.

Located at the Mimosa Leisure Estate in the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga, Yats has over 5,000 varieties of vintage French wines to offer its members. The exclusive club is still accepting members after more than a month in business. For now, people are welcome to try its food and beverage before they sign on the dotted line.

Some of the vintage wines in its temperature-controlled cellar date to as far back as the late 1800s from such houses as Margaux, d'Yquem and Mouton Rothschild. Its long wine list, however, offers more recent vintages—from 1928 to as recent as 1997—from Cheval Blanc, Petrus and Lafite Rothschild, to name a few.

To get an idea of how pricey some of these wines are, a bottle of Chateau Haut Brion (1945) can cost a wine connoisseur—hold your breath—P156,000. If you think that's a tad too steep, try the Chateau La Mission Haut Brion (1929). At P162,500 a pop, even Erap's rich cronies would probably think twice before giving him a bottle.

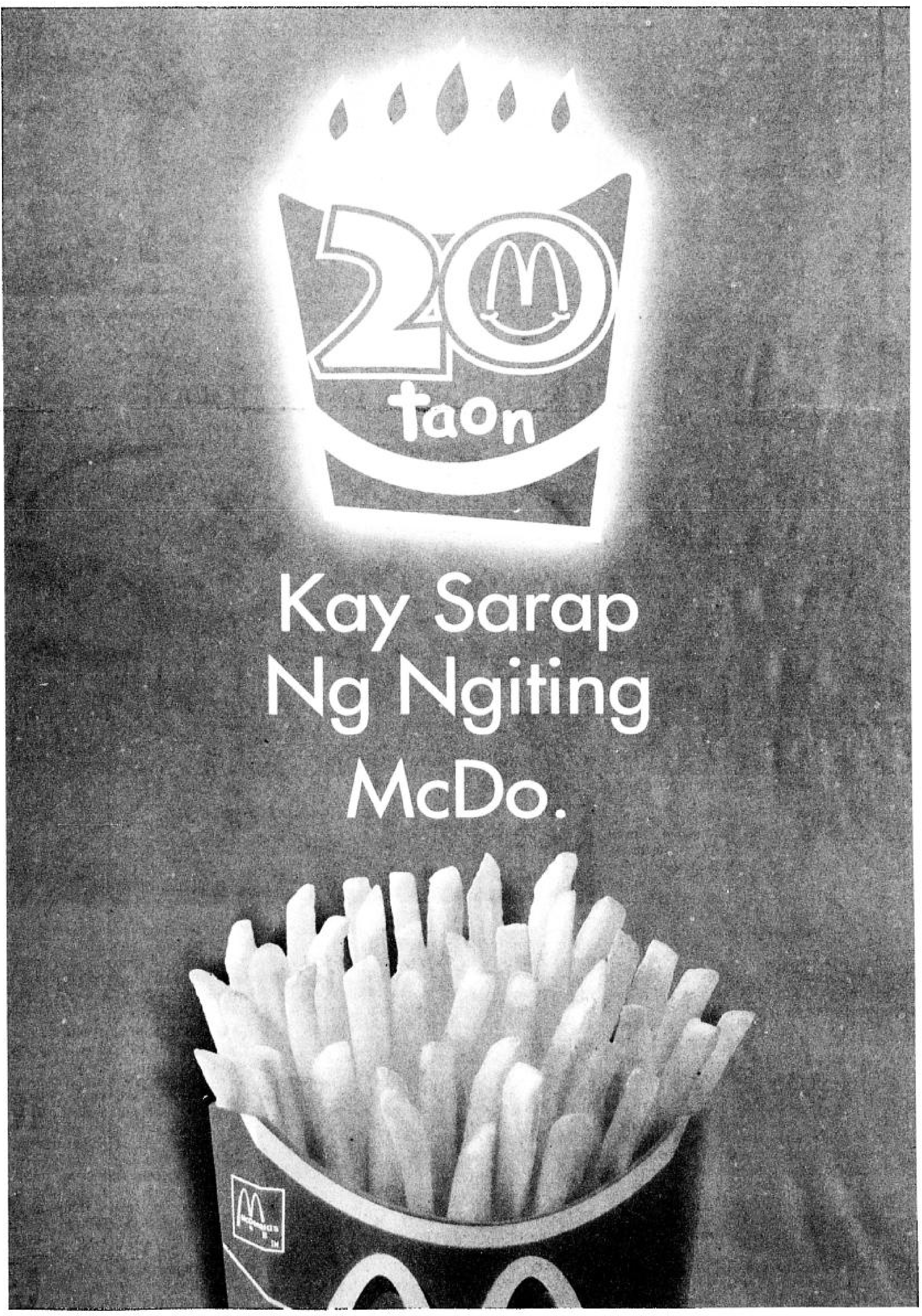
More affordable varieties include the 1971 and 1972 Chateau Haut Brion vintages at P16,300 and P11,000 a bottle, respectively. The list of whites is equally extensive and, depending on their quality and vintage, expensive. The Montrachet, Domaine Leroy (1969), for instance, costs P55,300 a pop. But the best part is all of these wines are duty-free as long as they're consumed within Clark.

"Members and their friends can drink all they want," said Michael Louie Sia, business manager of Yats International Ltd. "We also offer members cigars, caviar and the use of a function room, game room and state-of-the-art boardroom."

WINING/ p.C2

BLACKENED sea bass on tandoori mashed potato and shredded cabbage

WINE AND DINE. Yats International's main dining area



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Wining and dining–Yats the life!

(From page C1)

Matching cuisine

Such costly merchandise is certainly best relished with contemporary French cuisine amid the relaxing ambiance of wood, glass and picture windows that offer a sweeping view of verdant gardens outside.

Executive chef Chris Locher keeps the weekly menu simple yet interesting enough so it won't overshadow the wine or bore the diners. Since most guests come to Yats at least twice a week, he whips up a weekly set of "Chef's Recommendations," which are full-course meals based on current demands and, of course, the availability of ingredients.

"If you're paying six digits for a particular bottle," he said, "you want food that will be in harmony with the wine, not something that will overpower it."

That means no to complicated sauces, artificial seasonings and processed food and yes to "fresh market" ingredients. Despite his busy schedule, Locher also finds time to step out of the kitchen and talk to diners. He bases his decision to keep or remove certain items on the menu on such feedback. The Cajun sea bass on tandoori mashed potato is one such example. Regulars also love Locher's poached rainbow trout fillet in Chardonnay cream sauce with fresh herbs.

The chef, who's married to a Filipina, is no stranger to Asian flavors and preferences. He began his culinary career in Europe before working in various parts of Asia and the Pacific. "I picked up different flavors and techniques while I traveled," he said.

Natural flavors

When we trooped to Yats recently, Locher had prepared enough food to feed an army of famished golfers and duty-free shoppers. Since he updates the menu regularly, some of these items may no longer be available when you visit a week or two from now.

GARDEN lounge

Enhanced with cream and expensive white truffle oil garnished with fresh tarragon, the Celeriac espresso was expectedly rich yet surprisingly light on the palate. Each serving came with a bread stick that doubled as a stirrer. Celeriac, you guessed it, is derived from celery—the white bulb found in imported varieties from France.

After a rich cup of soup for starters, Locher prepared mixed mesclun greens with traditional Italian dressing. The crisp, refreshing salad wiped off any rich traces of cream and prepared our tongues for the main meal ahead. The seven main courses Locher cooked and served in two batches were simply too much for four people to share. But each seafood dish brimmed with enough flavors and textures to keep us interested as we tried to save enough room for the next batch composed of meat and poultry dishes.

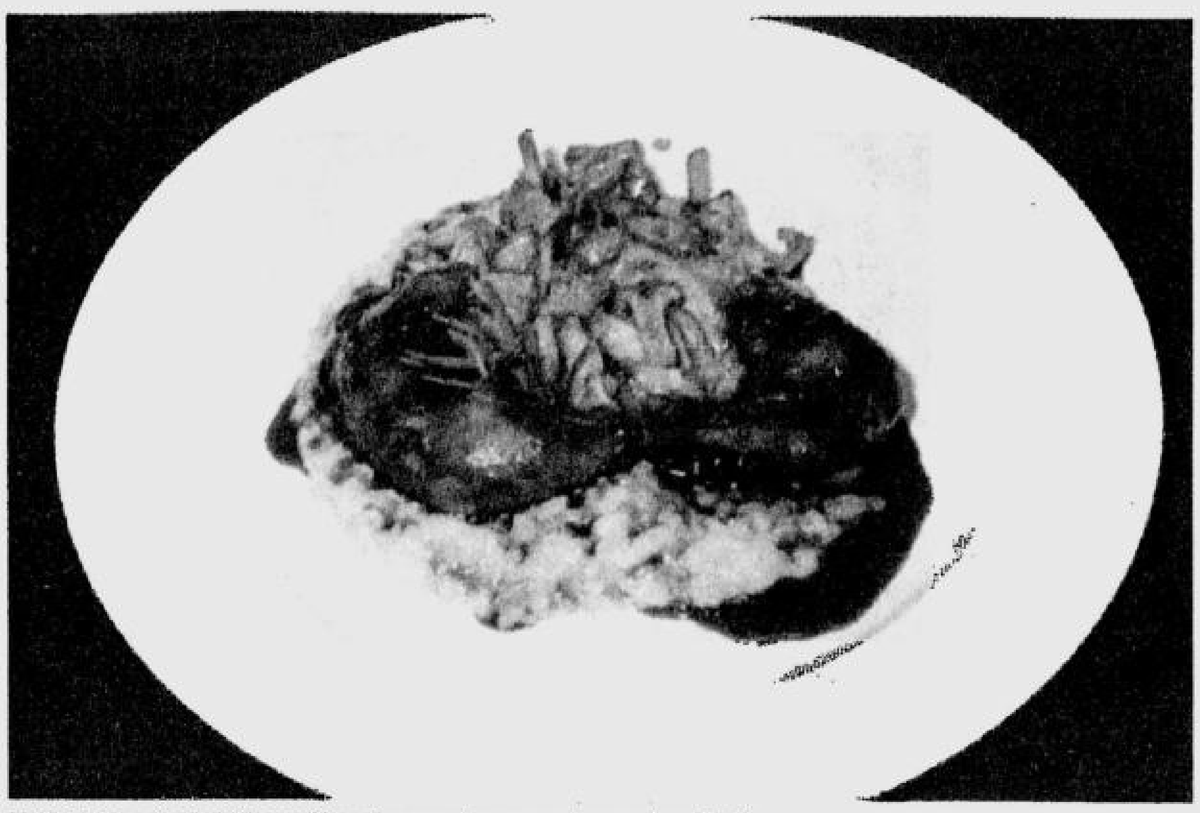
The poached rainbow trout, for instance, was garnished with scallops and a pair of New Zealand green-lip mussels. Its juicy flesh became even more tender due to the creamy Chardonnay sauce. Tangy tandoori mashed potato and a slice of lemon further brought out the natural flavor of blackened sea bass.

Surprise steak

Locher also served wild boar and chicken dishes, but he seemed most excited about his "surprise," grilled steak served with green pepper sauce, French fries and summer veggies. What was the big ado all about? Well, it wasn't every day that one got to serve guests with camel meat. "It's really for people who have tried almost everything," he said.

His dish didn't disappoint. Camel meat, grilled in stove-fired lava rocks, has a finer texture than beef but is as tasty. The camel's anatomy, according to Locher, is similar to that of a cow. Except for the desert animal's pair of humps, of course.

Gourmands, by the way, can savor dinner while watching the chef and his team of cooks at work. Diners can even don white aprons before stepping into the squeaky-clean and high-tech kitchen to help prepare their meals. Locher has reserved a glass-enclosed dining room for four people called "Chef's Dining" for this purpose.


MASALA braised chicken with spring mushroom and served on risotto

CHEF Chris Locher inside the Chef's Dining

The feel and scent of luxury extend to Yats' interiors courtesy of its Hong Kong-based designers: royal blue padded chairs with matching table covers, glass-lined wooden posts and trees encased in terrariums. The rich aroma of leather wafted in from the boardroom, where swivel chairs and padded walls have been made of fine, black leather.

After sinking several holes, golfers can take a shower in a bigger, equally luxurious bathroom before slipping into their business suits for that power lunch or crucial afternoon meeting. They can also unwind in the game room by playing a card game or two or watching the latest DVD. Yats also offers wedding packages to members and their families.

And this is just the beginning. The Hong Kong-based investors behind Yats International Wine Club are poised to develop a 13-hectare property within the former American airbase into an upscale country club. When that happens, Metro Manilans will have more reasons to troop to Clark.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

Pick a peck of pica plus noodles

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

PICANUDEL is compact, barely seats 20, and has fixed wooden tables and chairs, inviting patrons to eat quickly and go. At lunchtime it is full, and people stand around waiting for tables and orders; in the afternoon individuals and couples come and go. It is a good place to pick a noodle at any time of the day.

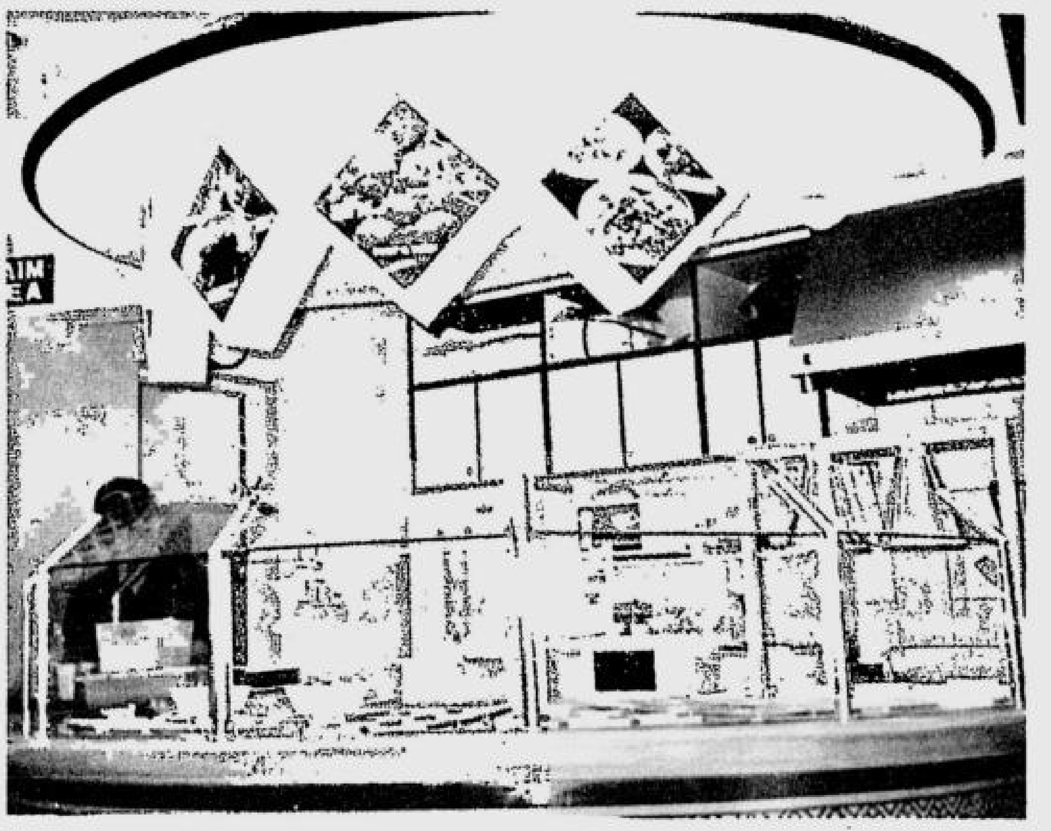
Noodles, we may remember, we learned about from China. (There is a rumor that Marco Polo took Chinese noodles to Italy, where they became spaghetti, but scholars assure us that that is not so; Italian pasta is an independent development.) I envision an early Chinese merchant in the islands, sitting and waiting for the barter payment for his silks and porcelain—beeswax and other forest products, *beche de mer* from the sea—and missing his home food. So he made some noodles. It is easy if you know how: mix flour and water to make dough, and cut it into strips, or "swing them by hand." He certainly cooked them with local ingredients, and produced the first *pansit* of the country.

If he married a Filipina, as many did, she probably offered to do it for him, and developed the first local *pansit*, because of course she used ingredients she knew, processed through her own taste buds, which had never experienced the Chinese dish. Her Pinay taste, the local ingredients, probably some add-ons from the region, made an indigenized *pansit*. Thus through the years we have regional noodles: with seafood from Malabon, with rice crisps from Marilao (Bulacan being rice-growing), eaten from a banana leaf in the markets of Lucban, sautéed the Spanish way (*bihon*, *sotanghon guisado*), shaken in boiling water (*luglug*) and flavored with a sauce (*palabok*).

Noodles are now strongly entrenched in Philippine life, having taken root in the midst of communities.

Lita Quimson, who was a chef in England, has traveled the world, and conceptualized Picanudel (1203 Chino Roces Ave. corner Vito Cruz Extension, Makati; tel. 899-5615; fax 807-1735), says she at first thought of a smorgasbord of noodle makings—vegetables, wontons, fish, shrimps, meat and more—that the diner could mix and match as desired. She soon found out that not everyone could design a dish, and most would rather choose among set combinations.

And so she has since concentrated on three kinds of noodles: flat noodles, egg noodles and *sotanghon*. These appear in such soup-noodle dishes as: Pica Batchoy (with *chicharron* bits and *bato*, *lapay*, etc.), Emperor Soup, Pica Chica Special (with wontons), Mermaids' Fantasy (with seafood). There are as well Mix & Match *pansit* (two kinds of noodles, vegetables and tofu); Pork Spare Ribs, Korean Beef Stew Crispy Tangy Pork (with lemon sauce and rice fried or plain) and special fried rice. Then a cavalcade of pica-pica: squid rolls (with tiny croutons stuck all over them), tuna balls, *siomai*, Vietnamese spring rolls, shrimp toast, fried wonton, Surf 'n' Turf nuggets; and all seven in Siete Picados. Dips and sauces include hot sauce, sweet-sour and *aioli* (the most popular).



Two desserts are offered: Banana Caramel Explosion and Co-co-Loco. And, of course, drinks like *buko-pandan*.

The prices are amazingly reasonable: an average P60 for standard soup bowls; P50 for Mix & Match; an average P30 for pica-picas.

All these dishes come from a semicircular counter designed like the cross-section of a large cup. Stainless steel covered compartments neatly fitted into the counter hold the elements and add-ons. The food is first weighed, then assembled in a hot bowl. The self-service includes picking up your own food, although there are personnel to fetch and carry, clean and clear.

LITA Quimson

Good value for your money, is what Picanudel offers. Food gives pleasure at many levels: at gourmet levels in fine dining restaurants; at quick stops to stave off hunger or answer an immediate need; on the streets when one is en route to other things; at home where memories bring comfort, family and community tastes are given play, and food culture is transmitted through generations. Picanudel is a quick stop, offering the noodles that we believe bring us long lives.

A postscript: New products

QUESO de Oro is a young Gouda cheese made in Misamis Oriental with 100-percent cow's milk supplied by dairy farmers. A Dutch expert taught the Dairy Foundation the traditional Dutch method of producing natural cheese. This has been available at Christmastime since 1997, but is now available all year round, launched as a "world-class cheese" proudly Philippine in origin. (Call 724-5136; e-mail ddfpi@ pacific.net.ph.)

Bulacan Sweets, source of Bulakeño and other provincial goodies (*pastillas de leche*, *acharang dampalit*, Pampanga *turon*, *taba ng talangka*, etc.) now packages its candied fruits—pineapple, guava, *santol*, *camias*, *nangka*—in neat, non-sticky 40-g packs. The attractive box has the nutrition facts printed on it, giving data such as calories per serving (120), total fat, cholesterol, sodium, potassium, carbohydrates, dietary fiber, sugars and proteins. This is great, being helpful and professional. We hope that all Philippine food products will endeavor to provide such relevant information for our modern day. (Call 741-5739.)

Cooking classes offered

CULINARY expert Dorothy Ferreria conducts a series of classes this month at Dorothy's Cooking School, No. 48 3rd St., New Manila, QC.

June 23, 1:30-5 p.m., "Great Recipes for Chicken 8" features chicken wings with black beans and garlic, Oriental chicken with fried kropeck, chicken casserole in mushroom cream sauce, Vietnamese-style chicken soup with flat rice noodles, stuffed chicken rolls.

June 26, 1:30-5 p.m., "Pasta and Salad 3" presents frozen fruit salad, fresh fruit salad with sour cream dressing, pasta with beef *salpicado*, fettuccine alfredo with bacon bits and baked chicken macaroni.

June 28, 1:30-5 p.m., "Cookies 5" consists of healthy fiber cookie bar, peanut butter cookies, rugelach, *lengua de gato* and triple nut tartlets.

June 30, 1:30-5 p.m., "All Wrapped Up" presents whole fish baked in salt, roast chicken wrapped in bread version 2, *empanadang antigo*, mini phylo purses with dipping sauce, simplified *machang* version 2.

On July 3 and 7 at Julius Maggi Kitchen, Nestle Building, Rockwell Center, Makati, Ferreria will conduct "From the Bread Basket" (French bread, *pan de sal*, sticky buns and rustic potato bread) and "Ways with Rice Around the World" (Thai *bagoong* rice, Spanish *paella*, salted fish fried rice, rice pilaf and Hainanese chicken rice).

Call 721-7735 or fax 721-2249.

Certificate courses

Maya Kitchen's certificate courses can teach you how to become entrepreneurs, and with best results guaranteed.

Ongoing June 22, 1:30-5 p.m., Basic Baking features hands-on techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick breads, yeast breads and more.

On June 23, 1:30-5 p.m., there will be Baking with Institutional Mixes. This course teaches one how to bake huge quantities of baked goods by using 2-kg packs. Items to be taught include assorted brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road), Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco-Banana Loaf, Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Pretzel, Hotdog on Stick, Mango Samurai, Chocolate Crinkles and Butterscotch Squares. A lecture on cost profit analysis will also be given.

Learn The Best of Maya Cakes and Pastries on June 30, 1:30-5 p.m. Recipes to be featured are Tiramisu, Sans Rival, Crunch Cake, White and Black Forest and Queen Elizabeth.

Call 892-1185/5011 local 108/1[illegible] or visit 8/F Liberty Building, 8[illegible] Pasay Road, Makati City or e-mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph.

Expo at mall

Learn delicious recipes from San Miguel Culinary Center as they conduct free cooking demonstrations at the upcoming Food and Beverage 2001 Expo. On June 23 and 29, 3:30 p.m., recipes from Monterey, Magnolia Chicken, Campo Carne, Star Garlic and Magnolia Cheese will be demonstrated.

The Expo, which will run June 2[illegible] 29, will also feature various activities such as product sampling and selling. The activity will be held at 2/F Multi-purpose Hall, Festival Mall, Muntinlupa City. Call 671-9876 local 402 to 405.

IF IT'S THICK IT MUST BE . . . Known as the "thicker, richer, tastier tomato ketchup," Heinz Tomato Ketchup has entered the Philippine market via the joint venture between H.J. Heinz Company and NutriAsia, maker of the country's leading ketchup brands. The joint venture has given birth to Heinz-UFC Philippines, which makes Heinz Tomato Ketchup—100-percent all-natural—now available in supermarkets and grocery stores nationwide.

HEINZ
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TOMATO KETCHUP
NET WT 300g

Delightful salad

THE ALL-TIME favorite *buko* salad acquires a distinctively new taste, enhanced flavor and unique sweetness with the use of specialty ingredients of bottled fruit preserves from Florence Foods Corp. Here's a recipe from Florence Foods' test kitchen:

2 c Lucia shredded young coconut (*buko*)
1 (450 g/15 oz) can fruit cocktail, drained
1 (450 g/15 oz) can sweet corn kernels, drained
½ c sweetened Florence coconut gelatin (*nata de coco*), drained
½ c sweetened Florence palm nut (*kaong*), drained
½ c *sago* (assorted colors)
½ c condensed milk
½ c Nestle Cream
¼ c grated cheddar cheese

In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients and mix thoroughly. Chill before serving. Serves 6.

Dining with ghosts at Le Grand Vefour

THE MAD TEA PARTY

Clinton Palanca

NAPOLEON Bonaparte and Josephine, Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Sainte-Beauve, Colette, Jean Cocteau, Louis Aragon, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Andre Malraux and that pretentious food columnist from the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, Clinton Palanca, have something in common: we've all dined at Le Grand Vefour, the café-restaurant at the Palais-Royal where, among other things, the meetings that led to the French Revolution of 1789 took place.

Forgive the name-dropping; but then, it's both very French and very Filipino, and I would like to think I am very both, one by inclination, the other by birth. (The Chinese part of me, which I am by ancestry, I think kicks in only when I do my interior design work: I don't think so much gold-leaf has been employed quite so lavishly outside of a Chinese restaurant. Bring sunglasses when you visit my flat. I am, parenthetically, very pleased with it; it's even more wonderfully hideous than I ever imagined. I'm still looking for a chandelier held up by monkeys with epaulettes, though; I think someone must have beaten me to the last one.)

These proclivities for lavish and overwhelming interior design were well catered to at Le Grand Vefour. After the construction of the Palais-Royal (which is not a royal palace but rather a neat set of apartments across the road from the Louvre), an M. Aubertot set up a fashionable place called the Café des Chartres. It was afterward, during the Restauration, though, that Jean Vefour took over and created the lavish decorations that the restaurant is known for. The ceilings are decorated with glass painted on the reverse, there are mirrors everywhere, velvet banquettes, gold leafing on every conceivable surface. Here, under these trappings, "the elite rubbed shoulders with the demi-monde" and its halls played "host to succession of kings, queens, politicians, society ladies and financiers" (I'm quoting liberally from the little pamphlet they gave me). I settled happily into my seat. Taillevent was too proper; Guy Savoy and L'Arpege were modern: why be tasteful when one can be tasty? Or sumptuous, to be more to the point. The only problem was that in an effort to be discreet, they had hidden the air-conditioners behind the banquettes; once in a while, the compressor would kick in, the seat would rumble, and a startling blast of semi-cold air would shoot up the back of your neck.

Where you don't belong

As usual I had arrived without a tie; this time, since I couldn't get an evening reservation and the day was stiflingly hot, I had come without even a coat, and my shirt sleeves were rolled up. They didn't blink. "This way, sir. Your companion has not arrived." I suddenly remembered that I had optimistically made a reservation for two, thinking that within the span of four weeks in Paris, I should have met some hot French girl, and after lunch at the Vefour we could go for some sex in the afternoon, engage in "le petite mort," and then go for a walk along the Seine, and basically indulge in every Parisian romantic cliché possible. It didn't happen. (I got hit on by a total of eight gay men, though, which is around my usual batting average.)

The waiter asked: "Were you expecting someone?"

"Yes," I replied. "The woman of my dreams."

They cleared away the other place-setting and handed me the menu. It was my last big meal in Paris. My wallet had reached an alarming degree of slimness and I had converted my last, "emergency" hundred dollars. But lunch at Le Grand Vefour is an emergency of the first degree and I felt no remorse. I ordered accordingly: ravioles de foie gras, a l'emulsion de crème truffee; Pigeon Prince Rainier III; tourte d'artichauts et legumes confits, sorbet aux amandes ameres. It was to be my best meal in Paris, and a large part of this was due to the service.

The French are natural snobs, and French waiters, who have read all the books and seen the films, know how they're supposed to behave, and they are the worst of all. I have often wondered what they thought of this Asian dude, underdressed in shabby clothes (faded Benetton shirt from the time when faded Benetton shirts were in), wandering into their restaurant with a rucksack on my back. That rucksack, by the way, has been everywhere, from the girlie bars of Bangkok to the Connaught in London; and when I'm not travelling with it, my terrier uses it to sleep on at night. I'm usually alone, and generally arrive on foot: I'm too stingy to take a taxi in Paris. (In New York I once entered an antique shop somewhat damp, and was turned out by the proprietor, who said: "After you've bought yourself an umbrella, and if you still have money to spend on the finer things of life, why don't you come back then." I took this graciously in stride, nodded and left, making sure I nicked the legs of a Louis XVI desk with my keys on my way out.)

But in Paris the waiters are unfailingly polite to what must seem to them a highly shady character. Since I don't have a dining companion, I usually read during the meal, and one waiter even carried over a stand lamp so that I would have more light. And at Le Grand Vefour, they were more than polite; they were friendly. Not in a "Hi I'm Bill and I'm going to be your server for this evening" sort of way; they were relaxed, chatty and complimented me on my choice of the pigeon. Yes, I'm a sucker for cheap praise.

After ordering I usually look around with a touch of panic, with the thought in my head: "Oh my God, I don't belong here!" My presence in that room no doubt brought the median age of customers down dramatically; well-dressed, well-fed tourists and French captains of industry were dithering between the various Margaux; I, meanwhile, was furtively checking my wallet to see if my budget could stretch to a rakish bottle of mineral water. There's a certain thrill, though, to being where you don't belong. I once entered an S&M club in New York and calmly had a cup of tea (camomile, at that) while all around me, people dressed in latex were snorting coke and copulating in corners. I often feel like the guy from out of town who walks into a Western saloon, and all the heads turn and silence falls in the room.

Meanwhile, here, the glances were more furtive, but I'm sure everyone in those gilded halls was wondering: "Who is this idiot, and what is he doing here?" At this point I'm sweating and thinking the same thing myself. What on earth am I doing here, instead of eating at Café de la Paix and Maxim's with all the other tourists? Shouldn't I be standing in front of the Eiffel Tower taking pictures like everyone else?

And then the food came; and it was, as my friend likes to put it, a "defining moment." I can remember every bite of the foie gras in the thin flour wrappings, in a broth that was too complex to deconstruct; I remember the perfection of the pigeon, which had been deboned and stuffed with innards, foie gras and truffles; and I remember the way the almond ice cream of the dessert melted in your mouth and seemed to fill your whole head with its sweet scent. Even the espresso was perfect, with its head of thick, oily brown *crema* on top. The waiter came about and we chatted for a bit, about the history of the place, and how Guy Martin, a chef with definite avant-garde tendencies, managed to fit into such a conservative-seeming establishment.

I didn't feel, though, any great sense of history during the meal; it's not like Les Deux Magots or the Café de Flore, where you can't escape the ghosts of Sartre and de Beauvoir. My epiphany came when nature called and I had to go to the restroom before the bill arrived, and I realized: Napoleon Bonaparte probably took a crap right here! I myself have never been to the Hotel des Invalides, where his body lies; but while other tourists have merely gazed at his bones, how many can say they've shared the same toilet with the Emperor? Ha! I thought, and I was so pleased with this thought that I was still trying to zip up my fly when I re-entered the dining room.

Solitary dining

Is eating alone at three-star restaurants fun? Well, yes and no. I will refer here not to Lucullus' famous quote about "tonight, Lucullus dines with Lucullus"; but rather, the last chapter of Italo Calvino's "If On a Winter's Night a Traveller," when the two characters engage in a shared reading. The 20th century has seen a decline in the appreciation of arts that must be appreciated in solitude and replaced them with modes of expression that can be experienced communally (you can't read a book together with someone, but you can both go to the movies); the apotheosis of this being the rock concert: you don't go to listen to an artist perform songs you have at home on CD; it is an act of communion with the million other screaming fans. Eating food with someone is like putting Rachmaninoff on while you're having sex; e.g., you may get distracted from the music because a tongue is in your ear. But then even if you're hearing the music less, you're having a lot more fun.

My point, obviously, is that I enjoy the focus and concentration I can bring to the creations placed in front of me; but I wouldn't mind being mildly distracted by the chair beside me being occupied by a gorgeous woman who has miraculously discovered that her schedule is completely blank that afternoon. "What shall we do after coffee?" she asks, wink-wink.

Oh, well. They do say that food is the new sex, and that cookbooks are the new pornography; in which case, my meal at Guy Savoy would be the equivalent of having had (paid) sex with Christy Turlington. When people asked me how the meal was, I told them that it was "orgasmic." But food isn't sex; and eating alone at the best restaurant in Paris is less fun than eating a crappy meal with someone with whom you're in love. Ah, sigh. I felt alone and out of place as I left Guy Savoy: a feeling which has been described, in some detail, by Camus in "The Outsider" and Sartre in "Nausea." A very French sort of feeling, in fact. Eh, voila! So I was finally beginning to fit in!

Time to move on, then, to the next place where people will look at me curiously or glance at me askew, wondering who I am and what I'm doing here. I'm beginning to get used to this feeling; you could say that I'm rather at home with this state of affairs. How ironic! (And irony is also so very French.) I strapped on my rucksack, caked with dirt from dozens of cities and smelling of dog-hair, rubbed my tummy, and disappeared into the crowds outside.

E-mail the author at clinton@i-manila.com.ph

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF WESTERN UNION DREAM HOME PRIZE DRAW

1. Ang Raffle Promo ay magsisimula sa May 30, 2001 hanggang March 18, 2002. Mga international money transfer na ipinadala at natanggap lamang ng sinumang Filipino citizens of legal age mula sa mga kasaling Western Union agent locations sa Metro Manila ang puwedeng isali sa prize draw.
2. Sa unang pagtanggap ng iyong pamilya o kaibigan ng international money transfer na galing sa iyo sa kahit saan mang participating Western Union agent location sa Metro Manila ay mabibigyan sila ng Western Union Pass Book at malalagyan ng isang sticker ang kanilang Passbook.
3. Sa bawat pagtanggap nila ng international money transfer ay malalagyan ng isang sticker ang kanilang Passbook.
4. Kapag may tatlong stickers na ang kanilang Passbook at na-validate na ito ng participating WU agent sa Metro Manila ay papapuntahin sila sa fulfillment centers para ibigay ang kanilang Pass Book.
5. Sa fulfillment center ay pupunitin ang kalahating pahina ng passbook na may tatlong stickers at ang booklet na may raffle coupon ay isosoli sa customers kasama ng free gift na kanilang pipiliin (caps, K-wallets, T-shirts o phonebook)
6. Puwede na silang sumali sa Western Union DREAM HOME PRIZE DRAW. Mga kumpletong certificate lamang ng iyong qualified receiver (tatlong validated stickers kasama ang kanilang pangalan, address, telephone number, at signature), ang puwedeng isali sa prize draw.
7. Di maaring ilipat ang mga stickers na natanggap ng iyong receiver (halimbawa: hindi tatanggapin ng fulfillment centers ang tatlong certificates na may tig-iisang sticker lamang).
8. Makakakuha lamang ng free gift pag nakakumpleto ng tatlong stickers sa Western Union Passbook.
9. Para makasali sa prize draw, dapat maghulog ang iyong receiver ng validated certificate sa drop box sa fulfillment center isang linggo bago ang scheduled na prize draw.
10. Kapag ito ay di nabunot, ang validated certificate ay isasali sa susunod na raffle draw.
11. Tatlong DREAM HOME raffle draws na gaganapin sa 11/F JMT Corporate Condominium Office, ADB Ave. Ortigas Center, Pasig City, sa mga sumusunod na araw:

    August 24, 2001 (12:00 ng tanghali)
    November 23, 2001 (12:00 ng tanghali)
    March 18, 2002 (12:00 ng tanghali)
12. Ang WESTERN UNION Dream Home Promotion winner ay kailangang Filipino citizen of legal age.
13. Ang mananalo sa bawat DREAM HOME prize draw ay siyang dapat na nakapangalang receiver sa tatlong qualifying international money transfers na isinali.
14. Ipaaalam ng Western Union sa DREAM HOME winner ang kanyang pagkapanalo sa loob ng 48 hours ng prize draw sa pamamagitan ng Registered Mail.
15. Ang mga hindi mananalong entries ay isasama sa mga susunod na draws.
16. Ipagbibigay alam sa mga nanalo ang petsa ng awarding ceremony na gaganapin sa lugar ng house and lot na premyo.
17. Ilalabas din ang mga pangalan ng mga DREAM HOME winners sa print ads sa Pilipinas.
18. Ang matatanggap na premyo ng WESTERN UNION DREAM HOME winner ay isang house and lot sa ReginaVille 2000 sa Barangay Inocencio, Trece Martires, Cavite-Floor plan SFW-D (Constructor: BANFF Realty & Development Corporation).
19. Isang house and lot lamang ang ipamimigay sa bawat draw at wala ng ibang premyong ibibigay maliban dito.
20. Ang WESTERN UNION ang magbabayad ng 20% tax sa mga premyong hihigit ng ₱10,000.
21. Ang WESTERN UNION Dream Home Prize Draw ay limitado lamang sa mga tatanggap (na Filipino citizens of legal age) ng international money transfer sa kahit saan mang kasaling Western Union agent location sa Metro Manila mula May 30, 2001 hanggang March 11, 2002.
22. Mga premyo na hindi kinuha ng nanalo sa WESTERN UNION Dream Home Prize Draw ay ibabalik sa Western Union na may pahintulot at approval ng DTI.

Per DTI permit no. 0669, series of 2001

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June 17, 2001—Another milestone has been marked by cellular leader SMART Communications. Today, SMART zed unleashes a new technology that's set to change the way its subscribers use their celfones.

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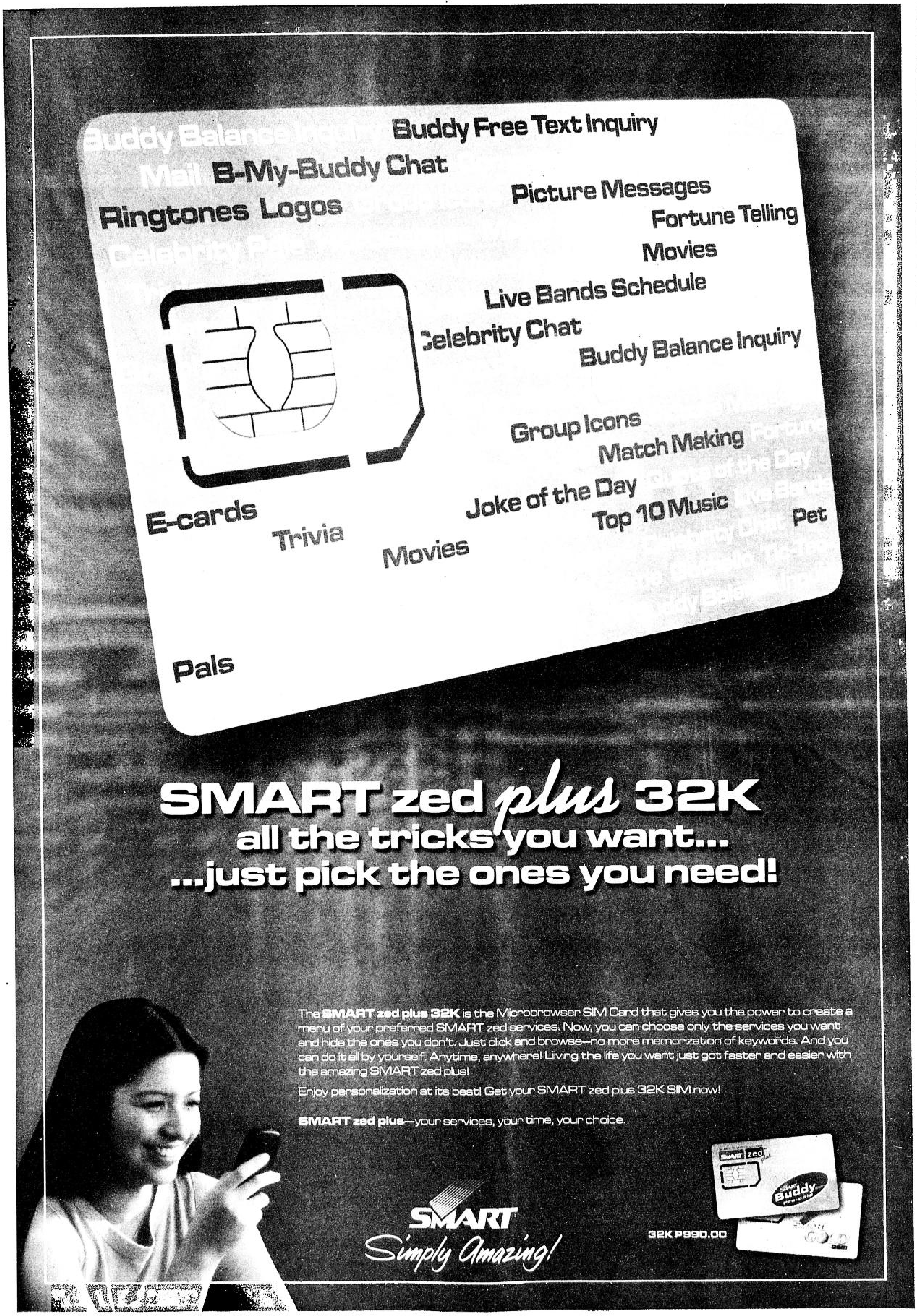
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The **SMART zed plus 32K** is the Microbrowser SIM Card that gives you the power to create a menu of your preferred SMART zed services. Now, you can choose only the services you want and hide the ones you don't. Just click and browse—no more memorization of keywords. And you can do it all by yourself. Anytime, anywhere! Living the life you want just got faster and easier with the amazing SMART zed plus!

Enjoy personalization at its best! Get your SMART zed plus 32K SIM now!

SMART zed plus—your services, your time, your choice.

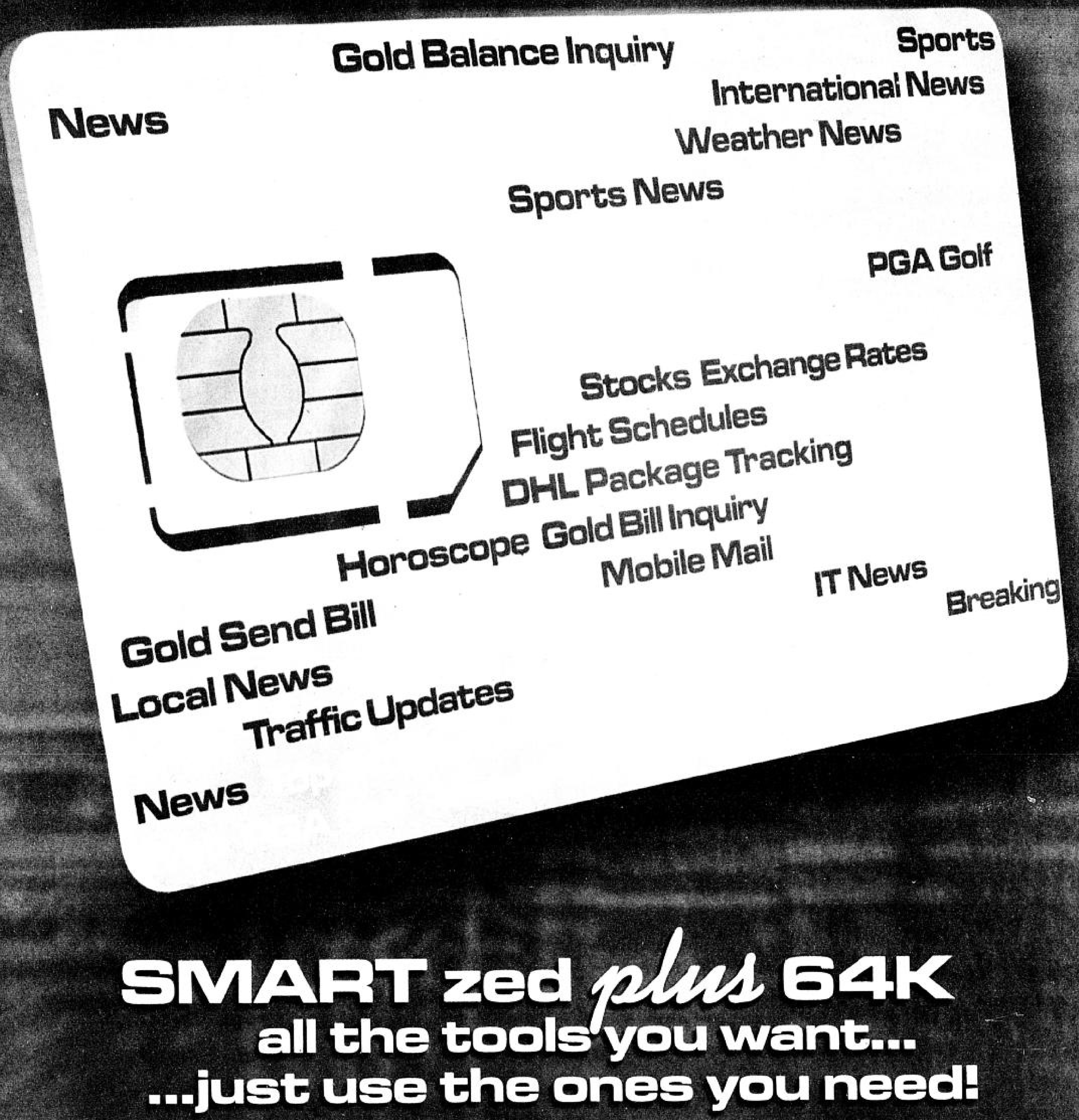
The SMART zed plus SIM card—it's easy as 1-2-3!

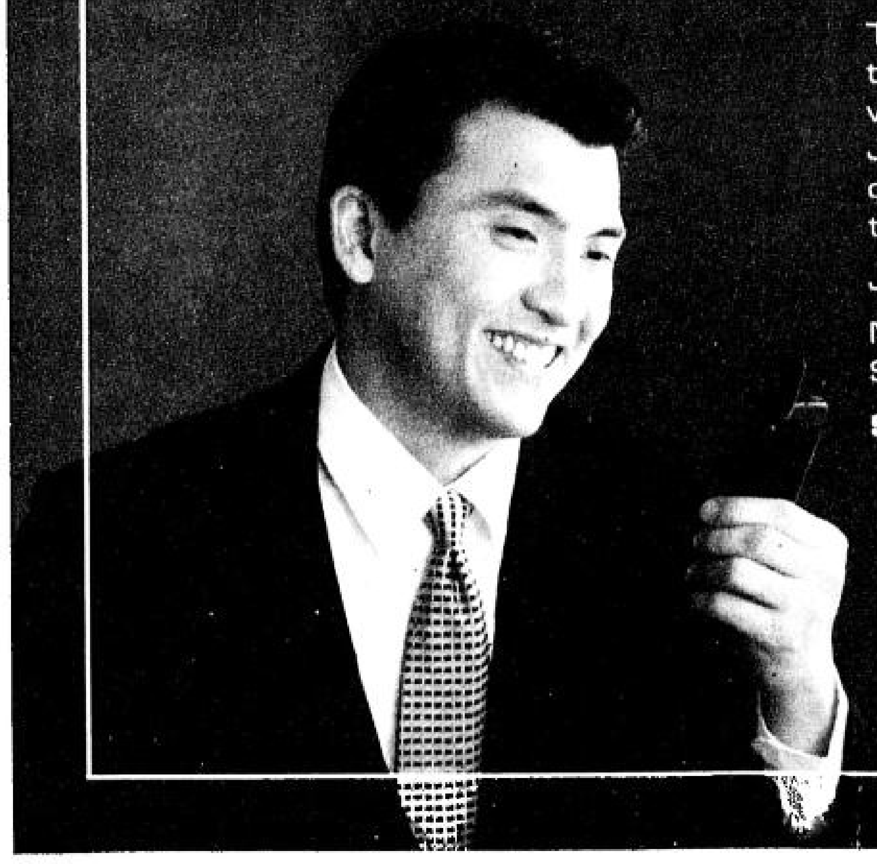
Creating your own personal menu with the new SMART zed plus is really easy. You can choose only the services that you want to appear in your personal menu and hide the ones that you don't. SMART zed plus is also a menu-driven SIM which means you only have to click and browse to get the services you want. No more keyword memorization.

Just click on the SMART zed menu and choose PERSONALIZE. Click on ACTIVATE and you will see the services currently available. Click on the services you want to appear in your personal menu, and your menu will be updated in no time! No more scrolling down a long and tedious list of services. Now, you're on your way to a whole new celfone experience. Just repeat the steps to add more services to your celfone.

SMART zed plus is as versatile as you are. Not only can you add the services you want, you can also hide the services that you no longer need. Just click on PERSONALIZE on your SMART zed menu. Click on DEACTIVATE and choose the services you want to hide in your personal menu. Need to take out more than one service? Just repeat the steps until you complete your list of preferred services.

Create your own kind of fun now with new SMART zed plus. Simply amazing!


Gold Balance Inquiry
Sports
International News
News
Weather News
Sports News
PGA Golf
Stocks
Exchange Rates
Flight Schedules
DHL Package Tracking
Horoscope
Gold Bill Inquiry
Mobile Mail
IT News
Breaking
Gold Send Bill
Local News
Traffic Updates
News
SMART zed plus 64K
all the tools you want...
...just use the ones you need!



The **SMART zed plus 64K** is a Microbrowser SIM Card that gives you control over the SMART zed services you want and the ones you don't. You get everything you want in your personalized menu. And you can do it all by yourself. Whenever, wherever. Just click and browse and say goodbye to keyword memorization. The bigger phonebook capacity and more room for text messages give you the winning edge when you need to get ahead.

Just another amazing way SMART zed makes living the life you choose easier!

Make the new SMART zed plus work in your favor! Get your SMART zed plus 64K SIM now!

SMART zed plus—your services, your time, your choice.

SMART
Simply Amazing!

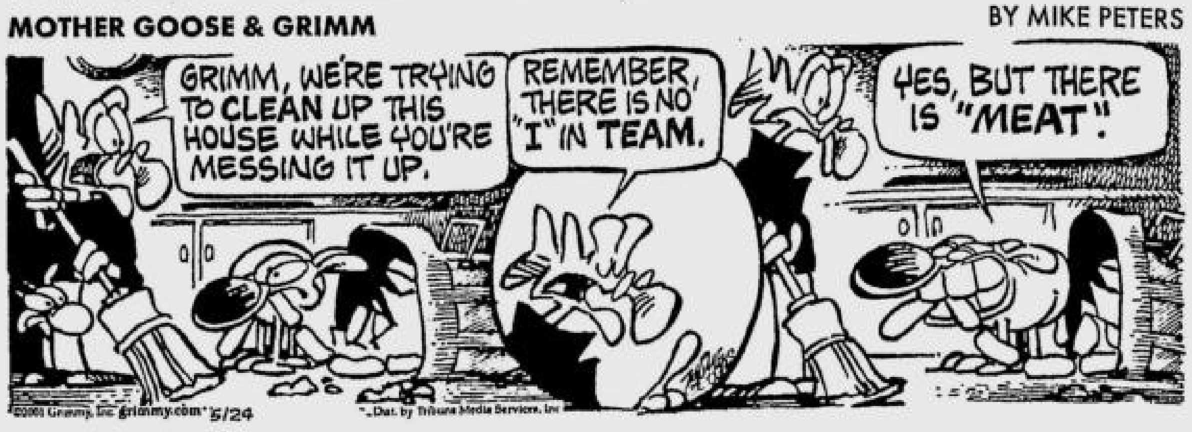
SMART zed plus
64k
SMART GOLD
64k
SMART Buddy Pre-paid

64K P1,290.00

ComicRelief

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


GRIMM, WE'RE TRYING TO CLEAN UP THIS HOUSE WHILE YOU'RE MESSING IT UP.
REMEMBER, THERE IS NO "I" IN TEAM.
YES, BUT THERE IS "MEAT".
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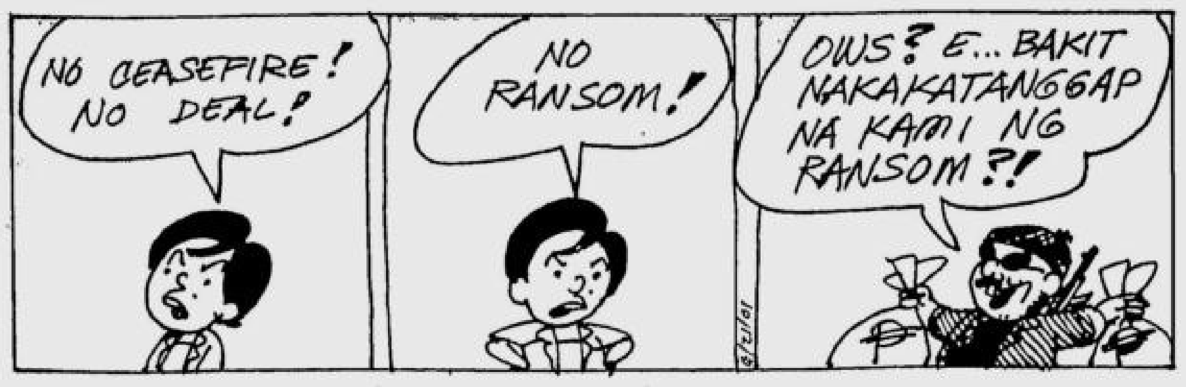
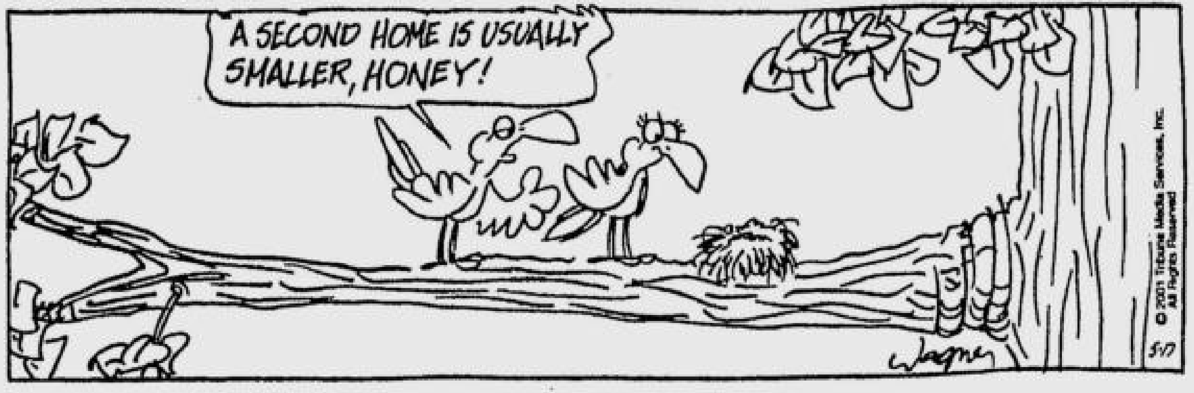
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NO CEASEFIRE! NO DEAL!
NO RANSOM!
OWS? E... BAKIT NAKAKATANGGAP NA KAMI NG RANSOM?!
6/21/01

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


A SECOND HOME IS USUALLY SMALLER, HONEY!
Wagner
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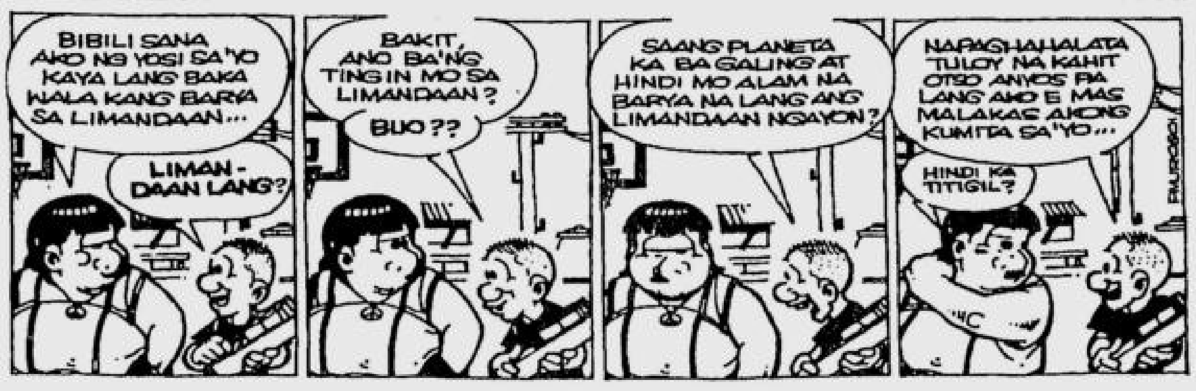
5/17

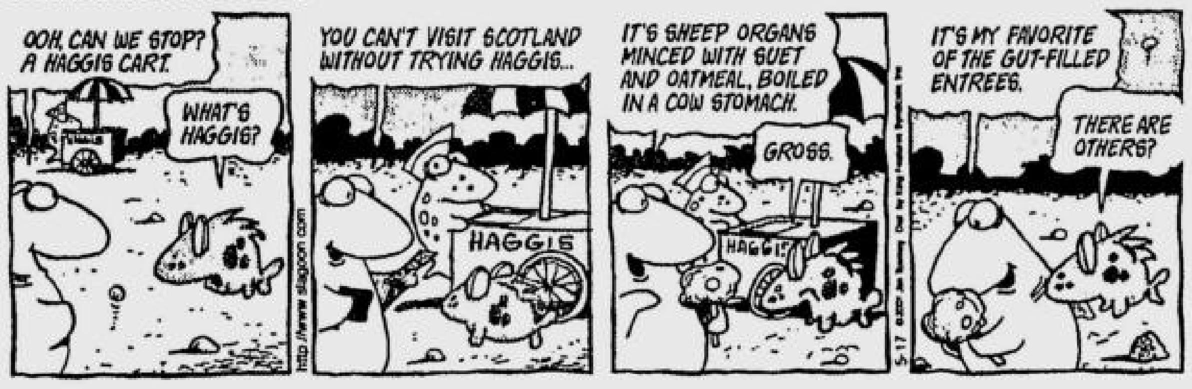
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


BIBILI SANA AKO NG YOSI SA'YO KAYA LANG BAKA WALA KANG BARYA SA LIMANDAAN...
LIMAN-DAAN LANG?
BAKIT, ANO BA'NG TINGIN MO SA LIMANDAAN?
BUO??
SAANG PLANETA KA BA GALING AT HINDI MO ALAM NA BARYA NA LANG ANG LIMANDAAN NGAYON?
NAPAGHAHALATA TULOY NA KAHIT OTSO ANYOS PA LANG AKO E MAS MALAKAS AKONG KUMITA SA'YO...
HINDI KA TITIGIL?

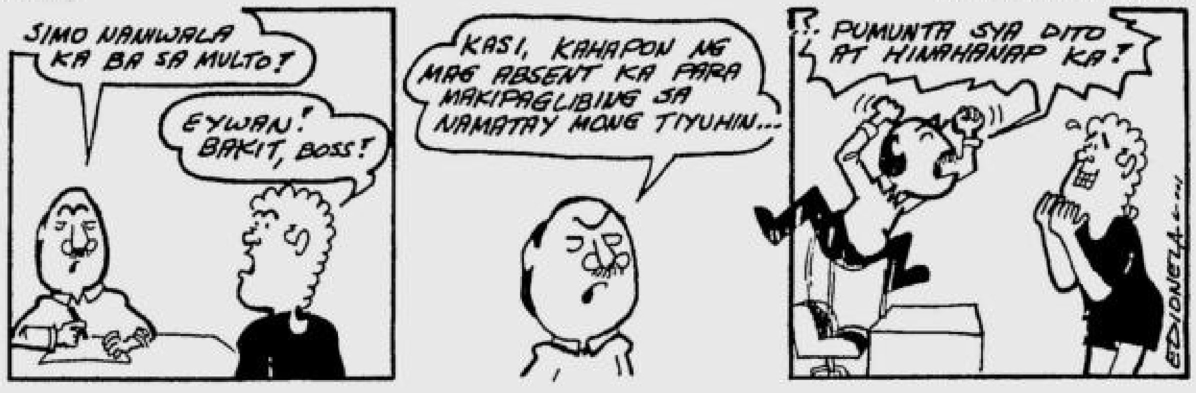
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


OOH, CAN WE STOP? A HAGGIS CART.
WHAT'S HAGGIS?
YOU CAN'T VISIT SCOTLAND WITHOUT TRYING HAGGIS...
HAGGIS
http://www.slagoon.com
IT'S SHEEP ORGANS MINCED WITH SUET AND OATMEAL, BOILED IN A COW STOMACH.
GROSS.
IT'S MY FAVORITE OF THE GUT-FILLED ENTREES.
THERE ARE OTHERS?

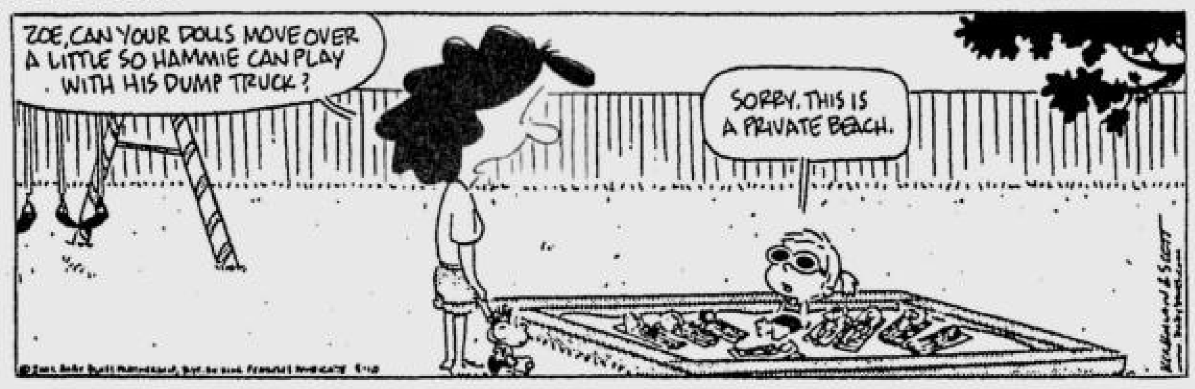
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SIMO NANIWALA KA BA SA MULTO?
EYWAN! BAKIT, BOSS?
KASI, KAHAPON NG MAG ABSENT KA PARA MAKIPAGLIBING SA NAMATAY MONG TIYUHIN...
PUMUNTA SYA DITO AT HINAHANAP KA?
EDIONELA

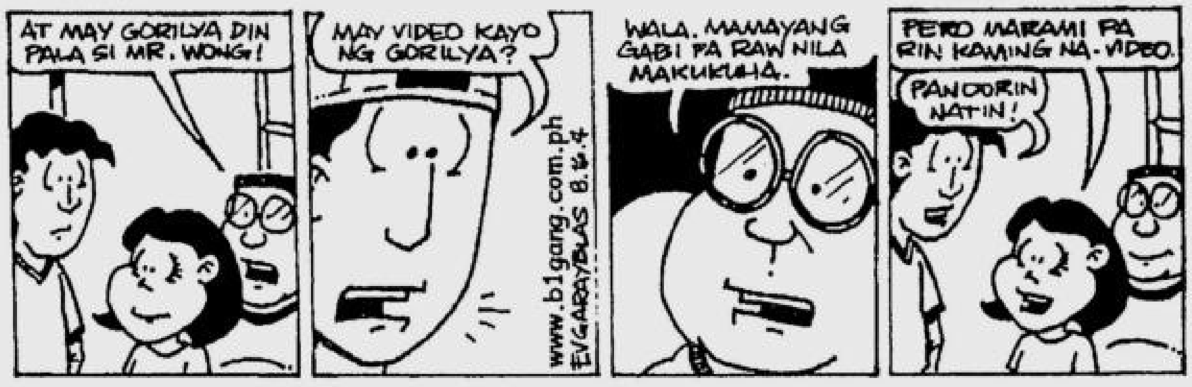
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE, CAN YOUR DOLLS MOVE OVER A LITTLE SO HAMMIE CAN PLAY WITH HIS DUMP TRUCK?
SORRY. THIS IS A PRIVATE BEACH.

B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


AT MAY GORILYA DIN PALA SI MR. WONG!
MAY VIDEO KAYO NG GORILYA?
www.b1gang.com.ph
WALA. MAMAYANG GABI PA RAW NILA MAKUKUHA.
PERO MARAMI PA RIN KAMING NA-VIDEO.
PANOORIN NATIN!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Prince William, Maureen Stapleton, Meredith Baxter, Kathy Mattea, Juliette Lewis

Happy Birthday: Your creative talents should enable you to move into positions that will bring the recognition you've been searching for. This can be a great year for you if you don't take the easy route and play instead of producing. Your numbers: 19, 21, 34, 41, 46, 48

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Money matters will upset you today. Be prepared to pay more than you expected if you want to shop for items that are not a necessity. It's a good idea to get involved in volunteer work.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your mate may be having financial problems. Be ready and willing to listen to any concerns. Your ability to find solutions will ease tension and put you back in favor.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will be totally unpredictable, but what's wrong with that? Others will find you spontaneous and exciting. However, your partner may find those anecdotes hard to take.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Hidden assets will come in handy. You may be offered the opportunity of a lifetime and ought to take advantage of it. Don't try to impress others by paying their way.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your stable and knowledgeable approach to helping others will be admired by those in high positions, and will add to your popularity with peers. Don't be afraid to take a leadership role.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your partner will be emotional and argumentative. Try to stay calm—and whatever you do, avoid disputes.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't be discouraged by a negative individual who has no vision. Look into the possibility of marketing some of your ideas. Altering your appearance could improve your image.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Past memories may occupy your mind today. Do your best to settle any pending issues once and for all. This is a day to move forward in a positive manner.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't tell someone you are seeing that you love him or her if you are questioning the relationship. Your biggest problem will stem from your lack of honesty about your personal life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll find yourself caught in the middle of an argument that has nothing to do with you. Secret information will be eye-opening, but it will also put you in an awkward position.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Spend some time on activities that lift your spirits and make you feel good. You need to interact with friends and forget personal worries.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Sudden decisions will cause upset and a change of routine in your home. Explain your reasoning to get the necessary support. It's time to take control of your life and start living for yourself.

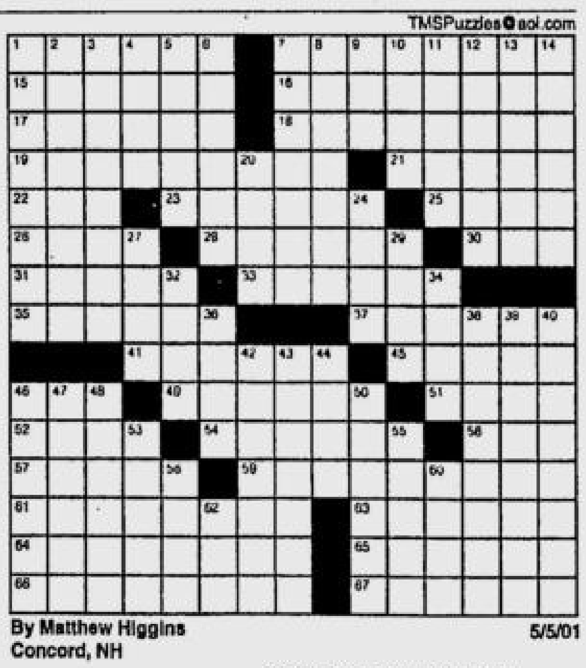
Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, loving and loyal to family and friends. You have a gentle and caring way of dealing with others, which will win you popularity throughout life.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

ACROSS
1 Rang bells
7 Lose temporarily
15 Change calling cards
16 Successful mimic
17 Island west of Chile
18 Alternate entrance
19 Speculative scientist of old
21 Reese of song
22 Damage
23 Type of tire
25 Narrow, straight cut
26 Footnote word
28 Fixed firmly in place
30 RR depot
31 Nudge
33 Cuts fleece
35 Say again and again
37 Ingredient in glass
41 Made dirty
45 Printers' measures
46 Dot follower, often
49 Model Kim
51 Favorites
52 Part of U.A.E.
54 Holy
56 Ancient Egyptian deity
57 Kitchen occupant of song
59 Petty faultfinder
61 Reconditioned tires
63 Fly an aircraft
64 Signer-on
65 Second of two mentioned
66 Recognized authority
67 Looks of contempt

DOWN
1 Softer and smoother
2 Capable of being cured
3 Write in a register
4 Alg. or trig.
5 Islamic ruler: var.
6 Servings of kishke
7 Handel composition
8 Mimic
9 South of France
10 Begged
11 Puts on, as cargo
12 Coral islands
13 Calm down!
14 List of mistakes
20 March 15th, e.g.
24 Meadows to a poet
27 AMA members
29 Plumbing problem
32 Slow down!
34 Blunder
36 Lubricates
38 Make figure eights
39 Drainage tube
40 Promise makers
42 Hero's lover
43 Cut out
44 Gossip
46 Core groups
47 Familiarize with new conditions
48 Meditator's formula
50 Calyx parts
53 German noble
55 Sofa
58 Detained
60 Quote as an authority
62 In imitation of



By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

5/5/01

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	B	A	T	E	S	■	P	I	P	■	A	S	E	A
L	A	B	E	L	S	■	O	O	O	■	H	A	L	L
T	H	E	R	E	S	■	I	N	N	■	A	U	T	O
O	S	T	I	A	■	A	L	I	C	E	■	D	O	N
■	■	■	■	N	O	S	U	C	H	T	H	I	N	G
E	N	A	M	O	R	S	■	■	O	U	I	■	■	■
D	I	V	O	R	C	E	E	S	■	I	N	A	N	E
E	N	I	D	■	A	S	F	U	N	■	G	O	O	D
N	A	D	E	H	■	S	T	E	E	P	E	N	E	D
■	■	■	S	A	P	■	■	F	A	L	S	E	L	Y
F	O	R	T	H	E	W	H	O	L	E	■	■	■	■
A	P	E	■	S	O	R	E	R	■	N	O	V	A	E
U	T	A	H	■	P	E	N	■	F	A	M	I	L	Y
N	I	C	E	■	L	A	C	■	O	R	A	N	G	E
A	C	H	Y	■	E	K	E	■	B	Y	R	O	A	D

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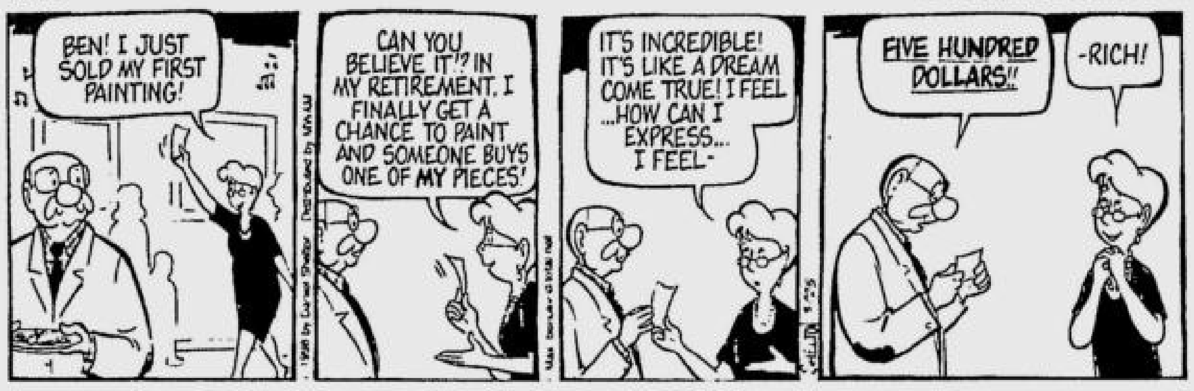
5/5/01

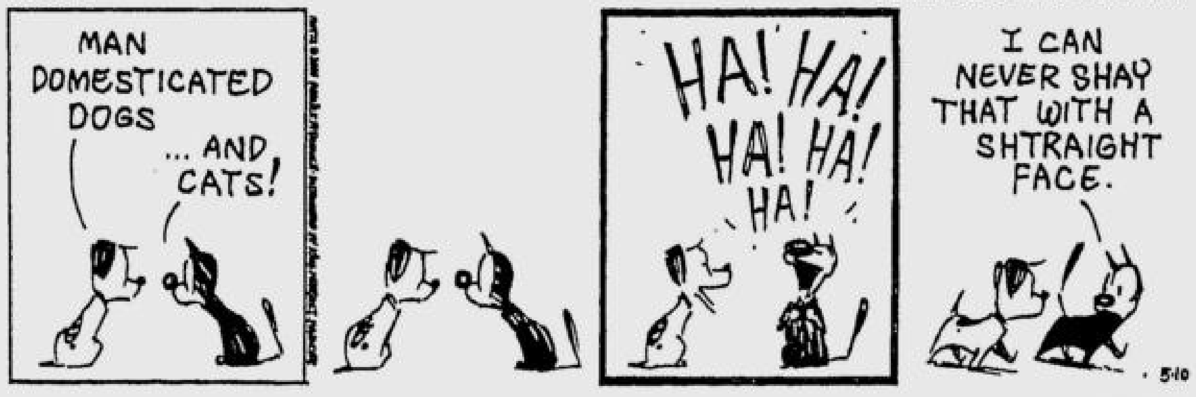
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN! I JUST SOLD MY FIRST PAINTING!
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT!? IN MY RETIREMENT, I FINALLY GET A CHANCE TO PAINT AND SOMEONE BUYS ONE OF MY PIECES!
IT'S INCREDIBLE! IT'S LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE! I FEEL ...HOW CAN I EXPRESS... I FEEL-
FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS!!
-RICH!

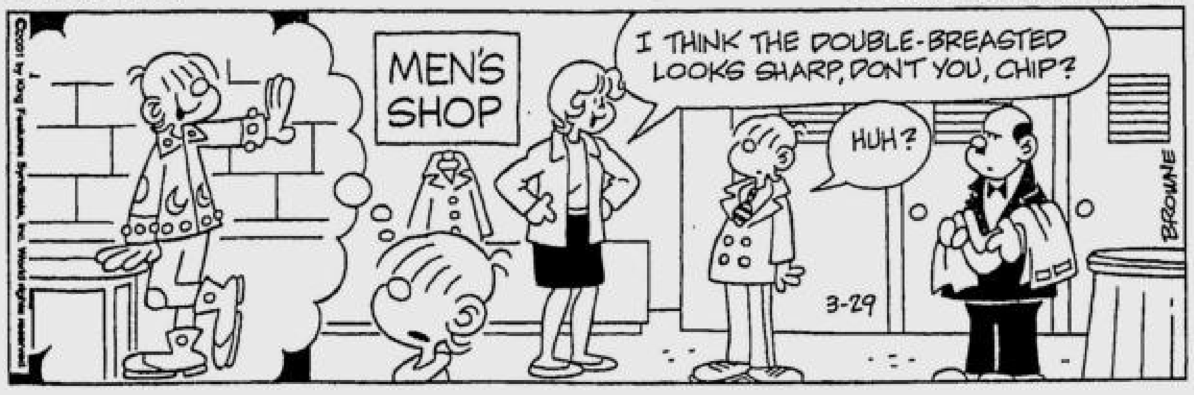
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MAN DOMESTICATED DOGS
... AND CATS!
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
I CAN NEVER SHAY THAT WITH A SHTRAIGHT FACE.
5·10

HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


MEN'S SHOP
I THINK THE DOUBLE-BREASTED LOOKS SHARP, DON'T YOU, CHIP?
HUH?
3-29
BROWNE
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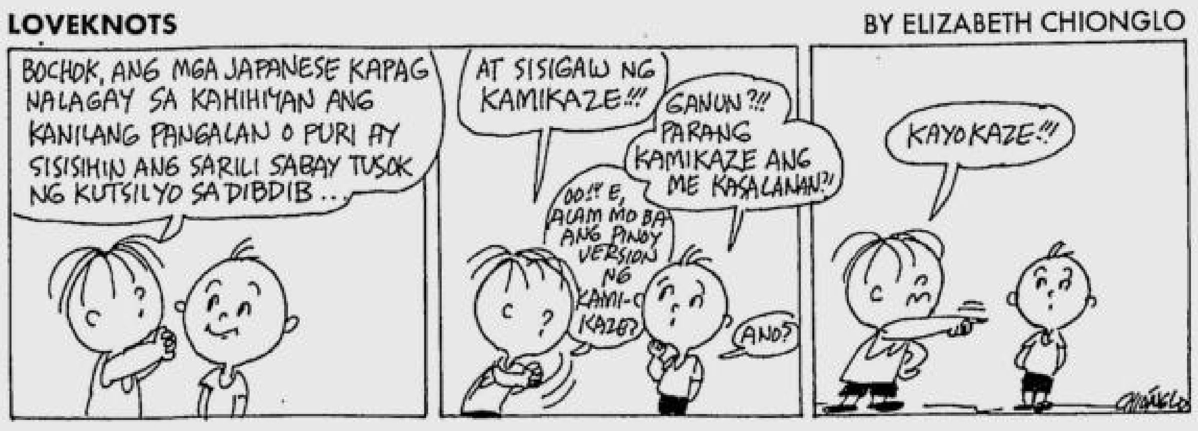
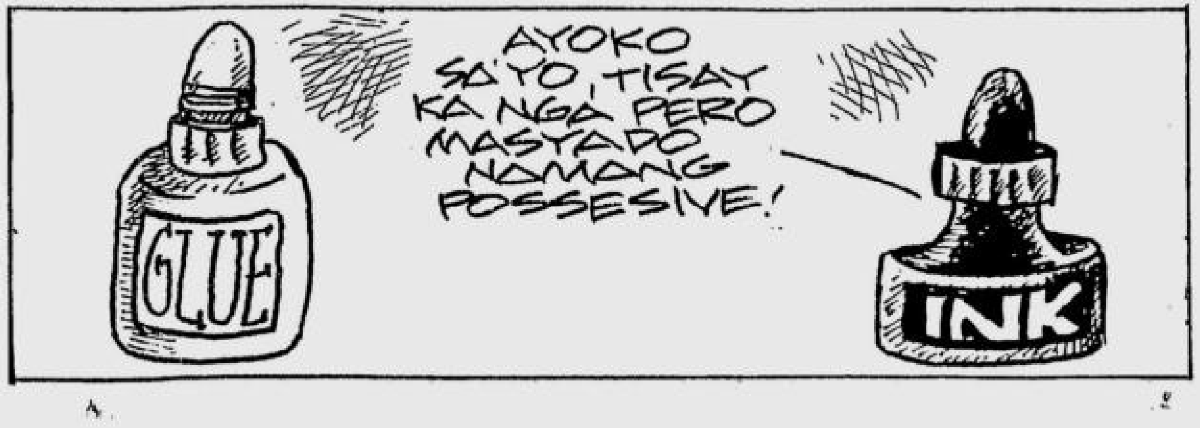
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

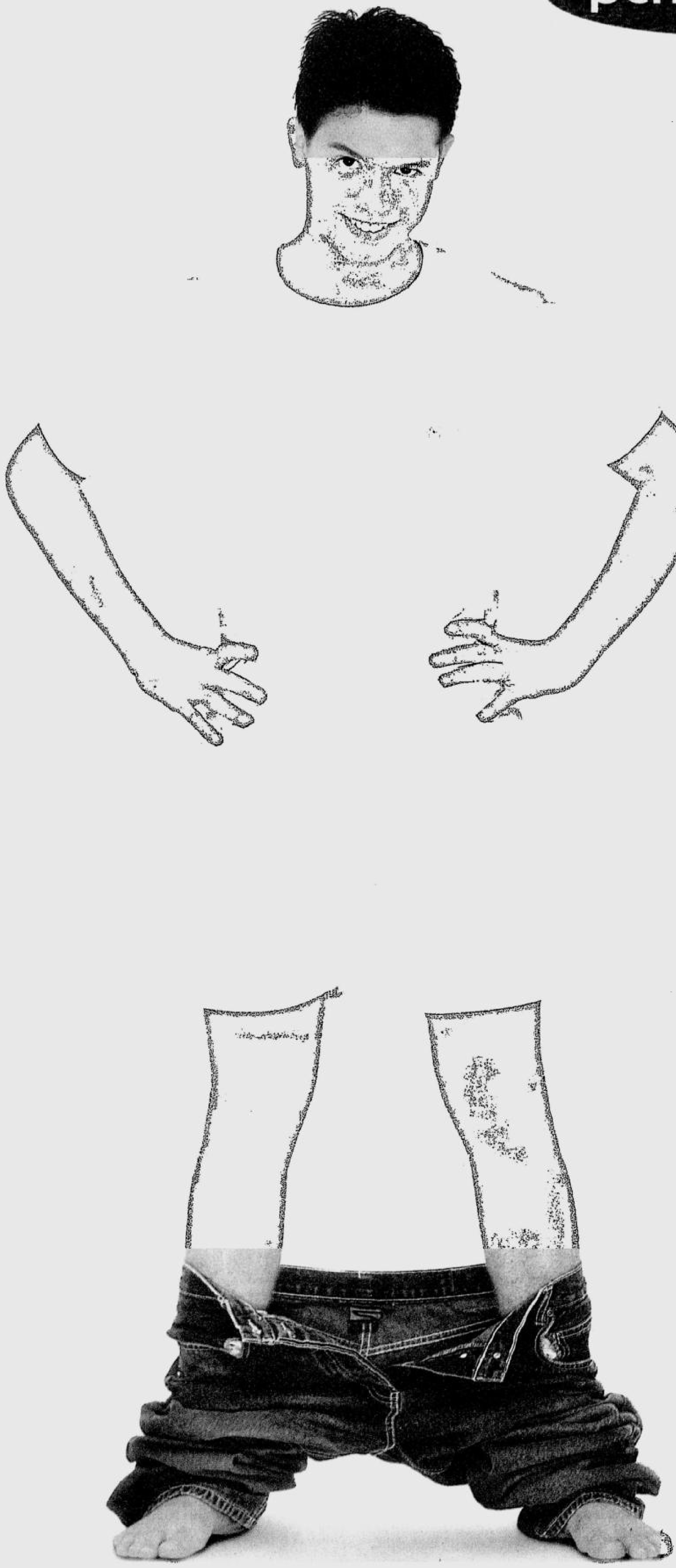

BOCHOK, ANG MGA JAPANESE KAPAG NALAGAY SA KAHIHIYAN ANG KANILANG PANGALAN O PURI AY SISISIHIN ANG SARILI SABAY TUSOK NG KUTSILYO SA DIBDIB...
AT SISIGAW NG KAMIKAZE!!!
GANUN?!! PARANG KAMIKAZE ANG ME KASALANAN?!
OO!! E, ALAM MO BA ANG PINOY VERSION NG KAMI-KAZE?
ANO?
KAYOKAZE!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


AYOKO SA'YO, TISAY KA NGA PERO MASYADO NAMANG POSSESIVE!
GLUE
INK

penshoppe®



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Siemens C35i W@P
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